University of Alberta

The Athaliah, Jehoiada and Joash Cycle According to Chronicles: A Case Study in Rhetorical Methodologies

by

Timothy Donald Goltz ©

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of *Master of Arts*

Religious Studies Program

Edmonton, Alberta
Fall 2004

Library and
Archives Canada

Published Heritage
Branch

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Bibliothèque et
Archives Canada

Direction du
Patrimoine de l'édition

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence
ISBN: 0-612-95632-6
Our file Notre référence
ISBN: 0-612-95632-6

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing the Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou aturement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.

Canada

ורוח אלהים לבשה את זכריה בן יהוידע הכהן ויעמד מעל
לעם ויאמר להם כה אמר האלהים למה אתם עברים את
מצות יהוה ולא תצליחו כי עזבתם את יהוה ויעזב אתכם:

Then the spirit of God came on Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest and he stood above the people and said to them, "Thus God has said, 'Why do you transgress the commandments of YHWH and do not prosper? Because you have forsaken YHWH, he has also forsaken you.'"

(2 Chr 24:20)

For Janelle,
the light of my life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

How does one begin to repay a debt of gratitude so large? The process of researching and (re)writing a thesis is at once both an incredibly introspective yet collaborative process. It is through, it seems, this "stretching" process that one begins to understand the true nature of academic evolution. I am first and foremost indebted to my wonderful wife whose support has made my research possible. Her patience, understanding and commitment to my scholarship have been consistent and unwavering. I will also forever owe my parents, Don and Anne, for the love I have of the (Hebrew) Bible. Their confidence in my abilities has been a steady source of encouragement in this endeavor.

My friends have also, in a sense, been taken on this journey with me. When one begins to draw deeply from the well of a biblical passage, it is nearly impossible to remain silent about one's musings. Many thanks go to those who have listened to my thoughts and commented where they could. Most of all, I am grateful for the laughter that we shared throughout this process. In my growing experience, moments of levity are critical in academia.

Finally, I would like to thank those professors at the University of Alberta who made my experience so much richer than I would have ever thought possible. Dr. Willi Braun taught me the significance of reading critically, Dr. Francis Landy taught me how to read beyond the obvious and Dr. Ehud Ben Zvi taught me an incredible respect for the Hebrew texts, including a budding appreciation of those historical communities who first (re)read and heard them. I am so privileged to have studied with scholars such as these.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One: Two Rhetorical Methods for Two Historical Audiences.....1

Chapter Two: Compositional-Rhetorical Exegesis Read from the Perspective of the Yehud Literati.................................48

Chapter Three: Persuasive-Rhetorical Exegesis Read from the Perspective of a Yehudite Listening Audience...............96

Conclusions and Suggestions for further Reflection.................................139

Bibliography..142

Chapter One: Two Rhetorical Methods for Two Historical Audiences

Introduction

Although modern biblical rhetorical criticism has explained much about "how" to practice various types of biblical rhetorical criticism, little has been said about "why" one should use rhetorical criticism or what it helps one to understand about a text. A number of questions are often ignored during the process of rhetorical exegesis. How and for what reasons does one choose a rhetorical method? What does rhetoric "do"? What is the relationship between histor(iograph)y and rhetoric? How have modern biblical scholars used rhetoric and to what ends? How, if at all, does an historical understanding of "audience" aid the understanding of the use of texts in antiquity? What audience(s)? What portions of the texts were they able to process, understand or act upon? Why? If there is more than one audience, how do they overlap?

Objectives of this Study

"Rhetorical hermeneutics *uses rhetoric to practice theory by doing history*...Rhetorical hermeneutics is the theoretical practice that results from the intersection between rhetorical pragmatism and the study of cultural rhetoric. Thus, one way of explaining rhetorical hermeneutics is to define the latter two modes of inquiry more fully and then describe how the overlap between them constitutes a rhetorical approach to specific historical acts of cultural interpretation."[1] This study attempts to be pragmatic; I am not interested (at least primarily) in the aesthetic qualities of biblical texts but in using rhetorical criticism to aid in understanding historical communities that produced, used and understood the texts in various ways for various purposes, sometimes simultaneously. Moreover, the understanding of rhetorical hermeneutics used here is not interested in "foundationalist epistemology" (i.e., some form of a "correct" interpretation over and above all others) nor is it focused on the argument between the text vs. the reader as to who "controls" interpretation.[2] It is rather interested in understanding the historical debates *and* agreements about the meaning of the text in a given historical community during a given historical period.

---

[1] Steven Mailloux, "Interpretation and Rhetorical Hermeneutics," in *Reception Study: From Literary Theory to Cultural Studies* (ed. James L. Machor and Philip Goldstein; New York: Routledge, 2001), 39-60 [45].

[2] Mailloux, "Interpretation and Rhetorical Hermeneutics," 52.

I have chosen Chronicles as my text generally, and the story of Athaliah, Joash and Jehoiada (2 Chr 22:10-24:27) in particular. My rhetorical analysis is not concerned with hypothetical reconstructions of the text; I will work with the MT and assume that its author, hereafter referred to as the "Chr", is the implied author/editor of the final form of the MT.[3] Moreover, I am not concerned with "historical kernels" that may be recovered from the text, nor with "what actually happened" as differentiated from the story recorded in Chronicles. Such difficulties have been pointed out by others; Braun demonstrates the precarious nature of sifting the historical kernels of "wheat" from the "chaff" in any (every) attempt to use Chronicles (indeed, any historiographical text) to reconstruct "real" history. My rhetorical methodology privileges the work of Chronicles holistically, focusing on the argument of the Chr rather than on "what really happened."[4]

This study is an investigation of two primary issues. The first is how two relatively distinct methods of biblical rhetorical criticism have been applied to texts over the last 50 years; the second is how I believe both may be used to illuminate our understanding of how Chronicles (and perhaps other biblical texts) were read/reread/heard within Yehud during the middle to late Persian period.

A Two-Pronged Approach to an Historical-Critical Rhetorical Analysis

The polyvalence of texts (and language in general) has been a concern of literary critics for some time. Stanley Fish, for example, has argued that *communities* of authors, readers, and hearers are all *interpreters* of texts. Sometimes, when the differences (be they social, political, economic, theological, racial, etc.) between various groups within a community that use a given text are significant enough, various meanings are created.[5] Moreover, these meanings are presumed *a priori* to be apparent and even explicit to the members of each group.

---

[3] On these issues, see Ehud Ben Zvi, "The Chronicler as a Historian: Building Texts," in *The Chronicler as Historian* (ed. Matt Patrick Graham et al.; *JSOTSup 238*; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 132-149 (esp. p. 132) and Shimeon Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible* (ed. David M. Gunn; trans. Dorothea Shefer-Vanson; Bible and Literature Series 17; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), 14.

[4] Roddy Braun, "1 Chronicles 1-9 and the Reconstruction of the History of Israel: Thoughts on the Use of Genealogical Data in Chronicles in the Reconstruction of the History of Israel," in *The Chronicler as a Historian: Building Texts* (ed. Matt Patrick Graham et al.; *JSOTSup 238*; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 92-105.

[5] Stanley Eugene Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class?: The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), 303-321; see also Stanley Eugene Fish, "Yet Once More," in *Reception Study: From Literary Theory to Cultural Studies* (ed. James L. Machor and Philip Goldstein; New York: Routledge, 2001), 29-38.

As such, studies of "meanings" should include significant attention to the concerns of the various groups within that community, with the conviction and knowledge that such a community would have had *at least more than one* way of reading/understanding a text. Given the constraints of historical inquiry, one may never be able to reconstruct all possible social-historical "readings" of a text, but that should never prevent reasonable attempts to study certain logical possibilities.

The question that must then be asked is *how* one might go about studying the text.[6] One of the ways to tease meaning out of a biblical text is to employ rhetorical criticism but even this "specialty" within biblical studies must be further defined. Important questions come to mind. What does (biblical) rhetorical criticism refer to? Who does it help us understand? What does it help us understand? And how?

In her discourse on biblical rhetorical criticism, Phyllis Trible has argued that there are two, *not* mutually exclusive, practices in modern biblical rhetorical criticism. In her words, "The differences relate to two distinct, though not incompatible, understandings of rhetoric: the art of composition and the art of persuasion."[7] Although Trible differentiates the two groups by method, what appears to be lacking is a pragmatic discussion of how the two aid in understanding historical audiences; or, better, why a scholar would choose to employ one methodology instead of the other. It is my intention to illuminate the pragmatic aspects of both methodologies with particular sensitivity to the interests of two audiences during the middle to late Persian period in the province of Yehud: 1) the Jerusalemite, literate ruling elite (primarily made up of the Temple staff) and 2) the non-elite, illiterate populace of Yehud which would have been made up by the poor, agricultural workers.[8] Moreover, it is my intention to demonstrate how the two methods may be used in tandem, with one illuminating the other and with the conviction that a holistic view of historical interpretation (or its best attempts) is more meaningful than the sum of its parts.

---

[6] For an excellent and recent introduction to representative interpretive strategies in modern biblical studies see Stephen R. Haynes and Steven L. McKenzie, eds., *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and Their Application* (Revised and expanded ed.; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999).

[7] Phyllis Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism: Context, Method, and the Book of Jonah* (ed. Gene M. Tucker; GBS: OT Series; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 32-48.

[8] To be sure, there would have been more social strata than these; however, a full-scale attempt at reconstructing how every meaning of a text might have been construed by every class of Yehudite is beyond the scope of this (and perhaps any) paper. My work here is intended to be representative of how two approaches might be used to understand two groups and should not be taken to mean that I am ignoring all other methods and classes of people.

Part 1: Rhetorical Criticism as the Art of Composition: James Muilenburg and Beyond

James Muilenburg is considered by most biblical scholars to have had a (the most?) significant impact on biblical rhetorical criticism in the twentieth century.[9] Most have traced this movement back to Muilenburg's essay "Form Criticism and Beyond,"[10] delivered at the Presidential Address at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in December of 1968. Muilenburg was still primarily a form critic; he advocated full use of form criticism and wished to be counted a form critic himself. However, he felt that an erudite scholar should not be constrained entirely by genre (partially due to the potential of anachronistic foisting of classical and Germanic literary typologies on ancient Semitic texts) due to unique elements in each biblical text.[11] What he proposed that was "new" was attention not only to genre but "a careful inspection of the literary unit in its precise and unique formulation."[12] By paying attention to precise formulaic precision (i.e., genre) and the deviations from this precision (what he considered to be rhetorical deviations), Muilenburg felt that it was possible to "reveal to us the texture and fabric of the writer's thought, not only what it is that he thinks, but as he thinks it." Muilenburg assumed that the Israelite/Judahite audience was the public; in his praise Herman Gunkel's work he asserts that, "...he had profound psychological insight...which stood him in good stead as he sought to portray the cast and temper of the minds of the biblical narrators and poets, but also of the ordinary Israelite to whom their words were addressed."[13] It is my contention that the "ordinary Israelite" would not have been able to both listen to the orator of a religious text and to simultaneously perform "a careful inspection of the literary unit in its precise and unique formulation." This type of analysis is very limited in its use to reconstruct the reception of the text by an ancient audience of "ordinary Israelites." So how may the Muilenburg rubric aid the modern scholar? It seems to me that a careful analysis of the various and highly complex literary devices within ancient Israelite religious texts, poetic and narrative, including chiasm, parallelism, inclusio, meter, etc. would be best utilized to understand the authors/editors and their capacity as a primary audience for/by whom the text was primarily composed.[14] As Muilenburg's students took up his charge to read the text closely, identifying literary structures within various genres of ancient Israelite literature, modern biblical rhetorical criticism was born.

---

[9] See, e.g., Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 25-32.

[10] James Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," *JBL* 88 (1969): 1-18.

[11] Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," 4-5. It is worth mentioning here that Muilenburg was also interested in the reconstruction of "original" texts; source criticism, however, does not aid in one's analysis of the reception of a text by an ancient audience whether elite or common.

[12] Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," 7.

[13] Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," 2.

An Analysis of the Practitioners of Muilenburg's "Stylistic" or Structural Rhetorical Criticism

While it is not possible to mention every scholar that has been affected, in some way or another, by Muilenburg, I believe it is possible to demonstrate certain characteristics/propensities of his students and followers; i.e., the practitioners of, in Trible's terms, those who are primarily concerned with "the art of composition."

Jack Lundbom

As a student of Muilenburg, Lundbom became interested in the structural rhetoric of ancient Israelite texts. For example, Lundbom posits that the inclusio and the chiasmus are two devices that control both at a microstructural level in the text of Jeremiah (e.g., individual prophetic speeches) and at a macrostructural level, controlling the "complexes which make up the *book* of Jeremiah."[15] After an exhaustive discussion regarding these two structural-rhetorical issues (at both micro and macro levels) in Jeremiah, Lundbom concludes that these devices were used as *homiletical mechanisms* to aid Jeremiah in his preaching.[16] Moreover, he argues that "Jeremiah's rhetoric" was understood by his audience and "no doubt appreciated by them." Such rhetorical features, he argues, also served as mnemonic aids so that prophetic speeches were remembered by the audience.

It appears problematic that some of these structures are far too disparate to have been appreciated by an ancient aural audience, especially on the macro-level. For example, the fact that Jeremiah contains 52 chapters begs the question of its ever having been orated, in its entirety, to an "general public" audience,[17] and, even if it had, it is doubtful whether subtle literary techniques would have been appreciated (at least to the degree which Lundbom describes them) by this audience. For example, Lundbom begins his discussion with the following macro-inclusio:[18]

---

[14] See, eg., the extensive and highly technical list of (19) devices believed to be used in Isa 34 in James Muilenburg, "The Literary Character of Isaiah 34," *JBL* 59 (1940): 339-365.

[15] Jack R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah: A Study in Ancient Hebrew Rhetoric* (SBLDS 18; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1975), 114.

[16] Lundbom assumes that a flesh and blood Jeremiah existed and authored (or dictated to Baruch – see p. 119) the scroll. Moreover, he assumes that, through proper understanding of the text (which he sharply distinguishes from the person of Jeremiah), one may achieve "a new estimation of Jeremiah the man;" Lundbom, *Jeremiah: A Study in Ancient Hebrew Rhetoric*, 115.

[17] That this is an audience comprised of the "public" is suggested by Lundbom's discussion on p. 114 and his use of the term "preacher."

Jer 1:1	דברי ירמיהו בן חלקיהו	*The words of Jeremiah,* the son of Hilkiah,...
Jer 51:64	עד הנה דברי ירמיהו	Thus far *the words of Jeremiah*

Lundbom argues that these two phrases tie the entire passage together. One must ask oneself, is it at all likely or even possible, for a listening audience to have been able to appreciate this type of inclusio? Given that oration was the primary means of mass communication in ancient Israelite society, the general public in that society would have had an appreciably longer attention span to an orator than it would today. However, there must be reasonable limits to the ancients' listening abilities, even under the most ideal circumstances.

It seems to me that the same issues of audience "appreciation" appear even on the micro-structural level. For example, Lundbom offers the following example of an inclusio in Jer 3:1-5:[19]

1 לאמר הן ישלח איש את אשתו והלכה מאתו והיתה לאיש אחר הישוב אליה עוד
הלוא חנוף תחנף הארץ ההיא ואת זנית רעים רבים ושוב אלי נאם יהוה
2 שאי עיניך על שפים וראי איפה לא שגלת [שכבת] על דרכים ישבת להם
כערבי במדבר ותחניפי ארץ בזנותיך וברעתך
3 וימנעו רבבים ומלקוש לוא היה ומצח אשה זונה היה לך מאנת הכלם
4 הלוא מעתה קראתי [קראת] לי אבי אלוף נערי אתה
5 הינטר לעולם אם ישמר לנצח הנה דברתי [דברת] ותעשי הרעות ותוכל

1 *Behold,*[20] a man divorces his wife
and she goes from him
And becomes the wife of another

---

[18] Lundbom, *Jeremiah: A Study in Ancient Hebrew Rhetoric*, 25.
[19] Lundbom, *Jeremiah: A Study in Ancient Hebrew Rhetoric*, 37-38.
[20] It is unclear why Lundbom leaves out the infinitive construct לאמר that actually begins this passage.

Will he return to her?
Would it not be greatly polluted
that land?
But you have played the harlot with many lovers
and would you return to me? Oracle of Yahweh
2 Lift up your eyes to the bare hills and see
where have you not been ravished?
Along the roads you sat for them
Like an Arab in the wilderness
You have polluted the land with your harlotry
and with your evil deeds
3 Therefore the showers have been withheld
and the spring rain has not come
Yet you have a harlot's brow
you refuse to be ashamed
4 Have you not just now called to me "My father,
you are the friend of my youth,
5 Will he be angry forever,
will he be indignant to the end?"
Behold, you have spoken but done
All the evil that you could.

Lundbom argues that the "repetition" of the particles הן and הנה are "significant" and that they "easily" establish the divisions of the poem. I find it difficult to believe that a hearing audience would be able pick out this "repetition" with any sort of ease. At any rate, the audience would never have to attach signification to any of these literary "limiters" themselves; they were passive participants in the oratory events – they only heard, they did not read. It is quite possible (likely?), then, that the oration did not begin at 3:1 but at 2:4: שמעו דבר יהוה בית יעקב וכל משפחות בית ישראל "Hear the word of YHWH, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel." If the speech did begin at 2:4, it would appear that an audience would have to be hopelessly keen to have been able to attach significant rhetorical meaning to the two particles as suggested; and even if it is conceded that the audience could have discerned such an inclusio, what does this information help us to understand? Despite my critiques, this does not mean that

Lundbom's research is worthless, only that the "audience context" needs to be reidentified; then his research becomes very useful indeed. It is my contention that complex structural rhetorical investigation is important in understanding how the literati, as supported by the Jerusalem Temple, might have understood the text as it was read, analyzed, reread and reanalyzed over time. This type of group would have had the time, literacy and access to the scrolls to construct extremely complex understandings of the religious texts.

Phyllis Trible

Trible has devoted much of her scholarship to the study of biblical rhetoric.[21] Her treatise on rhetorical criticism provides a helpful overview of the area from Aristotle to modern biblical rhetorical critics. Although she discusses two "camps" in biblical rhetoric – the art of composition and the art of persuasion – she utilizes a primarily compositional (i.e., "Muilenburgesque") methodology in her own analysis of the book of Jonah. To this end, she analyzes the "external design of Jonah"[22] which includes a complex study of the macrostructural symmetry and asymmetry within the book. Next, she breaks up the book into four structural units (two units per scene) and performs a careful analysis of each, carefully noting apparent chiastic structures, inclusios and parallelism along the way.[23]

While Trible is obviously a careful scholar, she does not provide the reader with an explanation of how to choose a rhetorical method. Indeed, she leaves the "yielding" of rhetorical "fruit" as ambiguous as possible; she remarks, "The test of its usefulness (i.e., the functionality of a given type of rhetorical sensitivity) comes not in theory but in practice."[24] The reader is left to try, try again, as it were, different methods of rhetoric until s/he is able to achieve the desired results. Even in a section entitled "Practical Instruction" where she describes some pragmatic tools for exegeting a biblical text, she offers no reasons for choosing one method of rhetorical criticism instead of another, leaving the reader on his/her own to produce "rhetorical fruit." One wonders, with good reason, which type of rhetorical rubric, compositional/structural vs. persuasive, should be used and for what purpose(s)? In other words, what is the rhetorical "fruit" for and for whom? What does it help its reader understand about the text, its historical uses or its historical audience(s)?

---

[21] In addition to *Rhetorical Criticism*, see also Phyllis Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (OBT 2; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978).

[22] Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 107-122.

[23] See especially "Appendix A" in Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 237-244.

[24] Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 101.

Meir Sternberg

Sternberg, another scholar who, through his seminal work on biblical "poetics", has influenced biblical rhetorical criticism, focused on the intricacies of biblical narrative which he claims were purposively composed to persuade its readers.[25] Sternberg's reading of the rape of Dinah episode is careful and complex, leaving few details unmentioned. For example, Sternberg spends over four pages in the chapter examining one verse, Gen 34:7:

> Jacob's sons came in from the field when they heard it. The men were grieved and very angry, because he had committed an outrage in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, a thing not done.[26]

Sternberg begins his exegesis of the verse by noting the "ambiguation" of 34:7a in which the rest of the tale specializes. The Hebrew syntax lends itself to more than one type of grammatical segmentation:

a) Jacob's sons came in from the field when they heard it. The men were grieved and very angry; or
b) Jacob's sons came in from the field. When they heard it, the men were grieved and very angry.

Among other things, Sternberg argues that the ambiguity of the time-line "perfectly dovetails" as part of the author's rhetorical strategy; "the chronological duplicity sustains the many-sided attack on Jacob and thus indirectly heightens sympathy for his sons."[27] Sternberg explicates both potential readings with great skill and care. At one point, after investigating several reasons for both, Sternberg asks his reader the following question:

---

[25] Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (ed. Robert M. Polzin; Indiana Literary Biblical Series; Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 441-481.
[26] Sternberg, *Poetics*, 451-455.
[27] Sternberg, *Poetics*, 452.

> Does the sequence extending from "the men were grieved" to "done" make (1) a two-part justification or (2) a single unit devoted to the brothers' feelings? The former hypothesis is the more complex. *Accordingly, the reader tends to integrate the causal clause as a sequel to the initial inside view, whose strength of feeling is explained from within in terms of the strength of judgment:* "They got very upset because in their view the crime was very serious." Indeed, the brothers later resort to similar normative phrasing, like "for that would be a disgrace to us."[28]

What is unclear to me is just who the "reader" Sternberg visualizes may be. He seems to equivocate between the modern exegete,[29] ancient reader (whoever that might be)[30] and an ancient "original audience".[31] Within his discussion of the ancient original audience, no information is given about them whatever, yet he assumes that this audience would have been familiar with the chronology and characters from the patriarchal narratives. Critics of Sternberg were quick to point out that:

> Sternberg uses his rhetorical insights to find his way to the narrative infrastructure of the text, showing in minute detail how the text engages the audience step by step in dramatic encounter. But in so doing, Sternberg's project becomes reduced to a *virtuoso formalism*: The ultimate object of inquiry is still the form and shape on the surface of the text itself. The argument that lies just beneath the surface of these shapes and forms, for which they are vehicles of encounter, becomes lost in the minutia of Sternberg's analysis. *Sternberg's reading of the text is one that only a scholar could manage*. He does not use his scholarly sensitivity to the forms and shapes of the text to uncover the life the text might have had within a religious community.[32]

Other Students and Practitioners of Muilenburg's Rhetorical Critical Analyses

A final representation of the intricate and insightful Muilenburg school of biblical rhetorical criticism may be found in the Festschrift *Rhetorical Criticism: Essays in Honor*

---

[28] Sternberg, *Poetics*, 455; emphasis mine.
[29] Sternberg, *Poetics*, 50-51.
[30] Sternberg, *Poetics*, 455.
[31] Sternberg, *Poetics*, 78-80 and 132.
[32] Dale Patrick and Allen Michael Scult, *Rhetoric and Biblical Interpretation* (eds. J. A. David Clines and P. R. Davies; JSOTSup 82; Sheffield: The Almond Press, 1990), 19; emphasis mine.

of James Muilenburg.[33] Some of the essays are incredibly complex; some of the charted analyses of the biblical texts are even more so. At any rate, the intricacy of the analyses in this collection certainly demonstrates Muilenburg's call to a "close reading" of biblical texts which necessitates an appreciation for their complexity and beauty. Of the fifteen essays contained in the compilation, I will mention two that I feel are representative of the whole and ask questions about the implications of both.[34]

One of the shortfalls of the collection is that it contains no essays regarding readership or audience. In "The Rape of Tamar: A Rhetorical Analysis of 2 Sam 13:1-22," George Ridout concludes that the pericope consists of the following chiastic structure:[35]

A. Amnon is in love with Tamar (vss. 1-4)
    B. Tamar comes to Amnon's house and bakes bread for him (vss. 5-9a)
        C. Amnon orders his servants out, that he might be alone with Tamar (vss. 9b-10)
            D. Amnon commands Tamar to come lie with him; she pleads with him but to no avail (vss. 11-14a)
                E. Amnon rapes Tamar, and his love for her turns to hate (vss. 14b-15a)
            D'. Amnon commands Tamar to get out; she pleads with him but to no avail (vss. 15b-16)
        C'. Amnon calls a servant back and orders him to lock Tamar out (vs. 17)
    B'. Tamar leaves Amnon's house, mourning her fate (vss. 18-19)
A'. Absalom hates Amnon for having raped Tamar (vss. 20-22)

Ridout then concludes, "On the basis of our passage, certainly it can be said that rhetorical criticism of the Old Testament can yield us much in the way of insight into

---

[33] Jared Judd Jackson and Martin Kessler, eds., *Rhetorical Criticism: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg* (PTMS 1; Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1974).

[34] The first essay is George Ridout, "The Rape of Tamar: A Rhetorical Analysis of 2 Sam 13:1-22," in *Rhetorical Criticism: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg* (ed. Jared Judd Jackson and Martin Kessler; *PTMS 1*; Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1974), 75-84 and the second is Kiyoshi K. Sacon, "Isaiah 40:1-11: A Rhetorical-Critical Study," in *Rhetorical Criticism: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg* (*PTMS 1*; Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1974), 99-116.

[35] Ridout, "The Rape of Tamar," 81.

Hebrew mentality."[36] It is precisely this monolithic view of the "Hebrew mentality" that is at issue in the present paper. The views of various groups within Israel/Judah varied tremendously *even within a given historical period*; the differences between groups is exaggerated even more if one wishes to examine communal usage of a religious text throughout various epochs in the Levant. At the risk of sounding cynical, it seems as if the most elementary questions of investigation are ignored by Ridout; who? (which group(s) does he have in mind?); what? (what does he have in mind when he refers to "mentality"?); where? (suffice it to say that the "mentalities" [whatever these might be] of the urban elite and the rural peasant would differ significantly.); when? ("mentalities" develop and mutate over the centuries); why? (why does chiasm tell us anything about "mentality"? Does it somehow prove that the ancients thought and expressed religious sentiment in complex ways or does it demonstrate that the most theologically significant component of ancient Israelite narratives may be found at the "center" of the chiasm, as thought by many modern scholars or both?);[37] how? (how does the modern scholar ensure that the literary structures were actually intended and what do these authorial intentions tell us about "Hebrew mentality"?).[38]

In the second essay, "Isaiah 40:1-11: A Rhetorical-Critical Study," Kiyoshi Sacon illustrates other issues within the Muilenburg rubric. Initially, Sacon reconstructs a *hypothetical text* based on various tenets of textual criticism, comparing the MT tradition with the traditions of the LXX and IQs^a. This is problematic on several levels when it is used in the larger context of rhetorical criticism. First, it is quite uncertain that the hypothetical text was *ever* composed/read/heard/understood by *any* historical community. If the goal of rhetorical criticism is to understand a given text as a communication of some sort to some type of historical audience, whether by complex literary structures or by simple and direct argument, it is best to study a text that actually exists rather than an hypothetical one. Of course, if it could somehow be *proven* that a reconstructed text was actually the *Urtext*, then a rhetorical analysis could be completed on that text.

---

[36] Ridout, "The Rape of Tamar," 83; emphasis mine. The term "mentality" is rather awkward; what does it refer to? In my opinion, the term, as used by Ridout, refers more to a worldview, something of an interpretive grid. If I am correct in my understanding of this sense of the term as used in the essay, clearly a(ny) singular view of "mentality" when used in reference to an ancient historical social group(s) is problematic.

[37] While chiastic structures may be quite helpful in determining/interpreting rhetorical features found in biblical texts, some scholars have stressed caution to those who would seek them too zealously; on these issues see Mike Butterworth, *Structure and the Book of Zechariah* (JSOTSup 130; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 53-57 and M. J. Boda, "Chiasmus in Ubiquity: Symmetrical Mirages in Nehemiah 9," *JSOT* 71 (1996): 55-70.

[38] An example of the difficulties surrounding authorial intention and meaning is given by Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 228-229; she describes how editors of the first draft of the monograph would comment on various literary devices that she had inserted into her text only to find out that she had not *intentionally* written these portions of the text in these creative ways; they "just happened." The question then becomes one of whether the unintended meanings of texts are "legitimate" or whether authorial intentionality is the best way to articulate the meaning(s) of a text.

The second problem is that textual reconstruction tends towards circular logic. As Fish has pointed out:

> ...both readers and interpreters begin (exactly the wrong word) *in medias res*; they go about their business not in order to discover its point, but already in possession of and possessed by its point. They ask questions and give answers – not, however, any old questions and answers, but questions and answers of the kind they know in advance to be relevant. In a sense they could not even ask the questions if they did not already know the answers to questions deeper than the ones they are explicitly asking.[39]

This hermeneutical issue is, perhaps, most manifest in textual criticism; scholars construct the text *they* believe is the "best" based on various presuppositions that govern their work. Then they analyze their reconstruction only to "discover" the meanings that they knew were there all along.[40]

After his textual reconstruction, Sacon crafts an extraordinarily complex examination of Isa 40:1-11. He divides the pericope into four strophes and analyses the linguistic structure of each strophe's "sentence-units," including repetition, chiasmus, inclusio, rhythm, rhyme and alliteration.[41] Indeed, the analysis is so complicated that he includes a legend[42] to aid his readers in deciphering his work on the passage.

---

[39] Fish, "Yet Once More," 37.

[40] In classroom conversations, my professor, Ehud Ben Zvi, has called this phenomenon the "cookie cutter effect;" i.e., if one uses a square cookie cutter, one inevitably ends up with square cookies.

My criticism of textual reconstruction should *not* be taken to mean two things: 1) that textual reconstruction is not useful. On the contrary, whenever a text can be proven beyond reasonable doubt that it is "corrupted," the reconstruction should be used in the rhetorical analysis (however, the threshold as to what constitutes "reasonable doubt" is a central concern here as it varies tremendously between scholars); 2) that I believe that my version of rhetorical criticism is perfectly objective; it is certainly not. However, I believe that it does take seriously the rewards of struggling with "difficult" (for the modern scholar) portions of ancient texts. Significant meanings may be wrought from the most arcane portions of texts. On these issues, see Mario Liverani, "Memorandum on the Approach to Historiographic Texts," *Orientalia* 42 (1973): 178-194, esp. 178-182. As Liverani has argued, a holistic approach to the text takes seriously the implications of two equally important types of reading: 1) the reading of the text "in its entirety" (i.e., avoiding the tendency to pick a text apart for its "historical kernels" and 2) the reading of the text from multiple points of view.

Among other things, Sacon concludes that, based on his investigation, "It is now obvious that an exceedingly high stylistic structure is efficiently handled in Isaiah 40:1-11, along with various techniques of poetical and phonological artistry. This leads us to assume that a particular personality stands behind it."[43] Moreover, according to Sacon, this individual (a flesh and blood prophet) spoke his message to the exiled community.[44] As has been pointed out above, it is doubtful whether an historical community hearing a text read aloud could have comprehended all the complexities of the text established here by Sacon. However, it is highly likely that an elite group of (re)readers could have, and probably did. Those who had free access to the text (both physically and academically) would have also had large amounts of time to spend pondering the text and its various meanings and implications.[45]

The Usefulness of the Muilenburg Rhetorical School in Historical Critical Biblical Studies

Based on the above evidence, a number of provisional observations might be mentioned. First, most rhetoricians who follow a Muilenburg approach understand the fruits of their labor as facilitating our understanding of either an historical author, an historical audience or both. I would argue that, for the most part, the *only* group that we may better understand vis-à-vis this type of rhetoric would be the elite group that produced, read, reread and compared biblical texts, who were well funded and, to varying degrees, literate. Socio-historically, this "window" of observation is rather small.

I submit that what the compositional-structural rhetoricians do *not* (primarily) aid us in understanding is how the majority of the general populace who were poor, illiterate and would have heard religious texts. Hearing a text read aloud allows primarily obvious

---

[41] Sacon, "Isaiah 40:1-11: A Rhetorical-Critical Study," 106-110.

[42] That is, a chart that includes symbols which represent (the author's understanding of) various literary units within each sentence.

[43] Sacon, "Isaiah 40:1-11: A Rhetorical-Critical Study," 113.

[44] Sacon, "Isaiah 40:1-11: A Rhetorical-Critical Study," 116. His understanding of the *Sitz im Leben* is based on vss. 2 and 6-7, although a reading of these verses seems to me to be inconclusive as regards a concrete historical situation.

[45] Again, the elite group who produced and (re)read this text (whether by financial and academic support of an individual as Sacon believes or by producing the text in a group effort, which seems more likely to me) would have had the financial resources to pursue academic rather than agricultural or other more mundane work-related concerns. On the issues surrounding the elite (re)readers of biblical texts, see Ehud Ben Zvi, "Micah 1.2-16: Observations and Possible Implications.," *JSOT* 77 (1998): 103-120.

arguments to be digested. It does not allow for the complex investigation of various literary devices which may only be uncovered via intensive investigation (i.e., reading, rereading, pondering, discussing with other literates and rereading again). However, far from being a marginal segment of ancient Israelite/Judahite society that scholars might otherwise ignore, this group of non-elites participated in the cult that was controlled and supported by the religious literati and their texts. In order to understand how certain rhetorical devices affected the majority of the people, one should employ a different sort of rhetorical methodology that is sensitive to the abilities of this group, bearing in mind that the overwhelming majority of oral performances of religious texts would have been carefully controlled in time and place by the literati who produced such texts and "used" them for their own purposes.[46]

Part 2: Rhetorical Criticism as the Art of Persuasion: Beyond James Muilenburg

The Challenge of Patrick and Scult

Dale Patrick was a student of Muilenburg who took up the rhetorical charge of his mentor in a very different theoretical direction than his colleague Jack Lundbom. At the outset, *Rhetoric and Biblical Interpretation* focuses on biblical narrative as opposed to poetry; in particular, chapter three focuses on historical biblical narrative.[47] As Patrick and Scult understand rhetorical criticism, it is to be associated with form criticism only inasmuch as form criticism seeks to identify the *Sitz im Leben* of various texts - their "occasion in life" or social function within the religious community.[48] Patrick and Scult are wary of any form-critical methodology that threatens to adumbrate a scholar's exegetical work by focusing on the "typical and representative" rather than the particular and the unique; the typologies of form criticism, in their view, are meant to serve the rhetorical scholar in reconstructing the historical event(s) that gave rise to the performance event of the biblical text, the engagement of the ancient rhetor and his audience, where sensitivity to orality/aurality is considered a key to unlocking the rhetorical life of a text.[49] Thus, "If we understand content as a message communicated through persuasion and power relations, the 'form' holds the key to content. The generic features of the form use the conventions of the community to engender the engagement necessary for the text to communicate its meaning."[50] That is to say that "how" a passage says is as important as "what" a passage says, when one is attempting to understand the function of a given (religious) text within an historical community.

---

[46] As a general introduction to the issues of literacy and hegemony in the ancient world, see Alan K. Bowman and Greg Woolf, "Literacy and Power in the Ancient World," in *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World* (ed. Alan K. Bowman and Greg Woolf; Cambridge: New York, 1994), 1-16.

[47] Many practitioners of Muilenburg's rhetoric tend to focus on poetry rather than narrative.

[48] Patrick and Scult, *Rhetoric and Biblical Interpretation*, 14.

[49] It is worth pointing out that recent form-critical scholarship has grown into a much more organic discipline that seeks to engage multiple avenues of literary and historical investigation. On these issues in general, see the recent collection of essays in Marvin A. Sweeney and Ehud Ben Zvi, eds., *The Changing*

Patrick and Scult argue that an "intimate acquaintance" of the "worshipping community" should be the guiding rubric for a proper rhetorical understanding of Hebrew Bible narrative. In my estimation, this is a largely helpful way to begin to understand a given text within a given community during a given time. However, Patrick and Scult seem to narrow their understanding of the Bible unnecessarily; "The Bible is not, after all, a philosophical text addressed to the scholar in his or her study, but a religious text addressing the reader as a member of a worshipping community."[51]

Patrick and Scult's understanding of the importance of rhetorical exegesis that demonstrates sensitivity to ancient "public" concerns raises a number of important questions regarding biblical texts. Which audience is addressed? Where? When? Are these texts *primarily* composed for a *reading* audience? What if certain parts *were* addressed to "scholars" i.e., priests/scribes to be (re)read in all their complexity, while other parts were written for the "commoner" to be heard at religiously sanctioned events? Is it even possible that these texts were authored/edited so carefully and intricately that they were addressed to both scholar and commoner for different reasons?

Gerrie Snyman has asked some of these same questions with specific reference to the production and use of the book of Chronicles.[52] Snyman argues that the *primary* audience of the book of Chronicles would have been the scribal class because of their literacy. This class of "scholars" would likely have served the rulers of the (middle-late Persian) period from Jerusalem who, at least for religious literature, would have been the priestly class supported by the Temple, some of whom may have had varying degrees of literacy themselves. The ruling priests, in their archival endeavors "were able to control

---

Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty-First Century (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 2003), and esp. Marvin A. Sweeney and Ehud Ben Zvi, "Introduction," in *The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty-First Century* (ed. Marvin A. Sweeney and Ehud Ben Zvi; Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 2003), 1-11 [9] who point out that, "Form-critical studies will no longer concern themselves only or mainly with the typical features of language and text. Rhetorical criticism and communication theory have amply demonstrated that the communicative and persuasive functions of texts depend on the unique as well as typical."

[50] Patrick and Scult, *Rhetoric and Biblical Interpretation*, 15.

[51] Patrick and Scult, *Rhetoric and Biblical Interpretation*, 23.

[52] Gerrie Snyman, ""Tis a Vice To Know Him": Readers' Response-Ability and Responsibility in 2 Chronicles 14-16," *Semeia* 77 (1997): 91-11397-100.

and possess the past."[53] As we shall see below, the (perceived, socially constructed) heritage of Yehud would have played a major role during that period, influencing, among other things, the maintenance of the temple, the state's landholdings, the relationship between the Yehudites and the Persian Empire and the relationship between the Jerusalemite elite and the rural poor. The "history" told in Chronicles was essential to the social/political fabric, consciously woven in Jerusalem by a very few individuals during that "theocratic" era, which attempted to unify Yehud as one nation under YHWH (and the Persians). Since the "worshipping public" was limited in its access to the Temple in Jerusalem by the priesthood; any rhetorical analysis of a biblical text that seeks to understand the "public" would do well to include some discussion of how the elite - who controlled the public's religious actions - viewed themselves through the texts that defined their position(s) of authority.[54]

Patrick and Scult further argue that biblical rhetorical scholars have unnecessarily limited themselves to studying texts as 'secondary rhetoric' - rhetoric that is so inasmuch as it attempts to achieve a "particular effect" (e.g., inspire, admonish or threaten). Patrick and Scult consider this derivative way of understanding the text to be of the Muilenburg school which was a logical extension of form criticism. Wherever the text deviated from its genre, it was understood to be communicating meaning. Patrick and Scult, however, view biblical narratives as being 'primary rhetoric;' the texts, they argue, were intended *primarily* to persuade an audience to some action. They note that there is no recent scholarly tradition of viewing biblical narrative as 'primary rhetoric', i.e., that the narrative's principal goal is to persuade its audience to action.[55]

Patrick and Scult argue that ancient Israelites employed rhetoric as much as Greeks did insofar as they deliberately constructed persuasive texts, even if they did not conceptualize and describe their rhetorical strategies. The Greeks merely became intellectually conscious of rhetorical persuasion (as part of political and judicial public discourse).[56] Thus, the Greeks did not "invent" what scholars now call classical rhetoric; rather, they described and developed it into a complex academic discipline.[57] According to Patrick and Scult, then, scholars ought to employ a methodology that takes seriously the persuasive intent of biblical narratives to a public audience, a view that reflects certain practices from ancient Greece.[58]

---

[53] Snyman, "Tis a Vice To Know Him," 98.

[54] Cf., e.g., 2 Chr 23:6, 18-19.

[55] It should be noted that Patrick and Scult's *Rhetoric and Biblical Interpretation* was published in 1990, the same year that Duke's *Persuasive Appeal* was published; both tackle similar issues of biblical rhetorical hermeneutics which view biblical (narrative) texts as being written, primarily for the "public" worshipping community, with a persuasive intent.

[56] Patrick and Scult, *Rhetoric and Biblical Interpretation*, 31.

[57] Aristotle's *The Art of Rhetoric* was the first systematic treatment of this discipline.

Patrick and Scult offer several arguments in an attempt to demonstrate that ancient Israelite narratives are primary (not secondary) rhetoric. First, biblical authors understood YHWH's past activities as rhetorical. That is to say there is no "chaotic" origin myth of God given as a framework within which to understand why things happen the way they do. When the world is first created, everything is perfect; humans cause strife in the world and thus humans must begin to act to remedy their actions. According to Patrick and Scult, this is in contrast to other Mesopotamian creation myths that describe "the beginning of the gods" as irrational, lustful and otherwise flawed. They argue that:

> Because (the) action (of the Mesopotamian gods involved in the creation myths) is grounded in the turmoil of conflict rather than an all-knowing will, the actions of the gods themselves contain no moral message as to how human beings should live. The gods' behavior is motivated by the behavior of other gods and in turn affects human beings fortuitously as innocent bystanders.[59]

Whether one agrees with their assessment of the creation myths of the ANE is beside the point; the bible's origin-myths (in Genesis) do appear to be rhetorical and decidedly polemical against the backdrop of other ANE creation myths. To further illustrate this point, they use a definition of a "rhetorical situation" from philosopher Lloyd Bitzer: "A rhetorical situation is one in which there exists 'an imperfection'...a defect...something waiting to be done...a thing which is other than what it should be."[60] Thus, the rhetor's[61] response to this situation is to persuade an audience to act (in accordance to God's will) vis-à-vis religious discourse to correct the wrong situation.

---

[58] Patrick and Scult fall decidedly short of employing a comprehensive classical-rhetorical analysis of biblical texts in a way that was taken up by Rodney Duke, as we shall see below.

[59] Patrick and Scult, *Rhetoric and Biblical Interpretation*, 33; parentheses mine.

[60] Patrick and Scult, *Rhetoric and Biblical Interpretation*, 34; Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1 (1968): 1-14; see also John H. Patton, "Causation and Creativity in Rhetorical Situations: Distinctions and Implications," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 65 (1979): 36-55 which expands Bitzer's notion of the relationship between rhetorical situations and discourse.

[61] Although they do not mention it, the "rhetor" discussed here could conceivably be the author (or implied author) of the text or the orator reading the text aloud to an audience.

Next, Patrick and Scult argue that the narrative form itself (as an innovative form distinct from the Mesopotamian chronicle or epic form) in biblical sacred history should be regarded as rhetorical. In their view, Mesopotamian epic myths contained the theology of the great religions of that time. Moreover, the oral performance of these tales had magical powers that lent themselves to festal representations (perhaps the best known is the Akitu festival and the public reading of *Enuma Elish*) and through these festivals, the participating community attained connection to the gods. Put another way, the annual recitation of *Enuma Elish* and its associated rituals "literally had the power to begin the world anew."[62] In their rejection of magical ritual that allowed control over YHWH, ancient Israelite narratives were designed to be read, reread and even left ambiguous at times. The arbitrary nature of God's actions, at times, implies that the narratives function rhetorically rather than magically; YHWH could not be "used" as other ANE deities could. The "primary narrative" of the ancient Israelites, the Exodus deliverance narrative, by which the people are to live and by which YHWH takes control of Israel vis-à-vis the Sinai covenant, is full of gaps and obscurities rather than religio-magical formulae.[63] This change in literary formula, they argue, was a powerful and conscious rhetorical statement in a world that was governed by rigidly controlled ritual. As a result, Patrick and Scult argue that, from the beginning, Jewish leaders began to analyze the obscurities in the text to clarify and to make sense in new temporal/geo-political contexts without tampering with the original texts. "These stories could adapt the message to the needs and exigencies of future generations under the guise of interpreting obscure verses."[64] Of course, the interpretation of the texts for every new circumstance was left to those who had access to them.

Patrick and Scult are, of course, not the only scholars who view (historical) narratives as primary rhetoric. Any representation of history is by its very nature rhetorical. That is to say all history has some sort of argument(s) to make about the events it purports to interpret.[65] No account of history is "innocent" or "objective." As Hayden White has argued, "(m)y thesis is that the principal source of a historical work's strength as an interpretation of the interpretation of the events which it treats as the data to be explained is rhetorical in nature."[66]

---

[62] Patrick and Scult, *Rhetoric and Biblical Interpretation*, 37.

[63] Although Patrick and Scult do not explicitly state so, of course this does not mean that gaps and obscurities do *not* exist in ANE origin myths.

[64] Patrick and Scult, *Rhetoric and Biblical Interpretation*, 40.

[65] David J. A. Clines, *Interested Parties: The Ideology of Writers and Readers of the Hebrew Bible* (eds. David J. A. Clines and P. R. Davies; JSOTSup 205; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 23-25.

White identifies three structural levels by which (he claims) every historical narrative attributes meaning. First, the narrative "explains" on the level of emplotment. This involves the author placing the story into a formulaic narrative typology, whether it is Romance, Tragedy, Satire, etc. The type in which the story is cast reflects the author's conception of how the "course" of history has run. Second, the narrative describes relationships between causes and effects as either mechanistic and predictable or arbitrary and whimsical. The expression of these relationships betrays significant aspects of the author's worldview; that is, how things do work and/or how things should work. Third, the outcome of the narrative will exhibit (implicitly or explicitly) an ideology (e.g., Anarchism, Conservatism, Radicalism, Liberalism, etc.) that governs the behavior of the characters in the world of the story.[67] As a result, White argues that all histori(ographi)cal discourses should be rhetorically analyzed first in order to ascertain the political interests of the author/editor(s) because all are first and foremost politically motivated; in other words, rhetorical analysis is a most important hermeneutical tool as it attempts to illuminate the political context from which the histor(iograph)y was written/edited.[68]

The Need for Another Method

If Patrick and Scult have issued a challenge to analyze historical narratives in the Hebrew Bible as primary rhetoric, a system of analysis that takes seriously the historical communicator, the text and the audience is needed (and unfortunately not provided in Patrick and Scult's work). George Kennedy, one of the most important recent scholars of biblical rhetoric in the New Testament, has argued that an Aristotelian rhetorical approach is an effective method of understanding the biblical texts as contextualized in ancient history. Although Aristotle was not the inventor of classical rhetoric, he was the first to express the process in a logical and critical manner; if one studies early classical rhetoric beyond Aristotle, it is clear that his influence was vast and even continues to this day.[69]

---

[66] Hayden V. White, "Rhetoric and History," in *Theories of History: Papers Read at a Clark Library Seminar, March 6, 1976* (Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, 1978), 3-25.

[67] White, "Rhetoric and History," 3. See also Rodney K. Duke, *The Persuasive Appeal of the Chronicler: A Rhetorical Analysis* (JSOTSup 88; Sheffield: Almond Press, 1990), 31-32.

[68] White, "Rhetoric and History," 24. For an overview of both White's historical and literary critics, and a partial defense of his ideology see Wulf Kansteiner, "Hayden White's Critique of the Writing of History," *History & Theory* 32, no. 3 (1993): 273-295. For a (somewhat reserved) defense of White's theories, see Ewa Domanska, "Hayden White: Beyond Irony," *History & Theory* 37 (1998): 173-181; for a critique of White's rejection of a positivistic view of history, see Eugene O. Golob, "The Irony of Nihilism," *History & Theory* 19 (1980): 55-65; for a critique of White based on the differences between historians and philosophers of history, see Maurice Mandelbaum, "The Presuppositions of Metahistory," *History & Theory* 19 (1980): 39-54; for a discussion of historians (focusing on White) who have spearheaded the rethinking of intellectual history, see R. Jacoby, "A New Intellectual History?," *American Historical Review* 97 (1992): 405-424.

One might reasonably demand the rationale for applying a classical critical method to literature that was produced, promulgated and interpreted in West-Semitic cultures in the Levant.[70] However, if one can imagine, as Aristotle did, that certain individuals in *every* human culture make use of persuasion to promote and defend in ways both oral and written and that some are more successful than others for various reasons, classical rhetorical theory appears relevant:

> Rhetoric is a counterpart to dialectic; for both are concerned with such things as are, to a certain extent, *within the knowledge of all people and belong to no separately defined science. A result is that all people, in some way, share in both; for all, to some extent, try both to test and maintain an argument [as in dialectic] and to defend themselves and attack [others, as in rhetoric].* Now among the general public, some do these things randomly and others through an ability acquired by habit, but since both ways are possible, it is clear that it would also be possible to do the same by [following] a path; for it is possible to observe the cause why some succeed by habit and others accidentally, and all would at once agree that such observation is the activity of an art.[71]

Thus, Aristotle described rhetoric as he experienced and taught it in ancient Greece; however, as in most philosophical enterprises, he sought to explain universal phenomena. Aristotle's *Rhetoric* "provides a method for looking at rhetoric as a human phenomenon, for learning how to use it, and also for *a system of criticism*, in that the features of speech that Aristotle describes can be used not only to construct a speech, but *to evaluate any form of discourse.*"[72] Kennedy believes that, to a large extent, he was successful and that Aristotle's rhetorical system is still useful in analyzing transcultural-transhistorical human communication.[73]

---

[69] Aristotle and George Alexander Kennedy, *Aristotle On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse: Newly Translated with Introduction, Notes, and Appendixes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); George Alexander Kennedy, *The Art of Persuasion in Greece* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963) 81, 114-115; see also Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 38.

[70] See, e.g., the issues raised by Roland Meynet, *Rhetorical Analysis: An Introduction to Biblical Rhetoric* (New, revised English ed.; JSOTSup 256; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 172-175.

[71] Emphasis mine; Aristotle and Kennedy, *On Rhetoric*, 28-29 (1354a). See also Kennedy's critical notes and commentary of the Greek throughout the passage.

Key Concepts of Aristotle's Rhetorical Method [74]

Aristotle defined rhetoric as, "…an ability, in each [particular] case, to see the available means of persuasion."[75] Kennedy has observed that this statement does not exclusively refer to either the orality or the "writtenness" of a speech; rhetoric may involve the "seeing" of *any* potential persuasive tactic available to him/her. This is an important concept as Aristotelian rhetoric is often (and erroneously) viewed as inappropriate for analyzing texts because it was "originally" conceived of as being an orally structured strategy.[76]

According to Aristotle, πίστεις "means of persuasion" are divided into two categories: nonartistic and artistic.[77] Nonartistic refers to external witnesses, written contracts or other forms of evidence that are not easily manipulated by the rhetor. Artistic evidence involves techniques that may be manipulated by the speaker and are three in number: 1) ἔθος which is the manner of the rhetor (e.g., where s/he would demonstrate to an audience that s/he is fair-minded, logical and, therefore, trustworthy); 2) πάθος which is the persuasive nature of emotional discourse, whereby the rhetor awakens particular emotions in his/her audience to his/her advantage; 3) λόγος which is the persuasive nature of logical discourse engendered by true or probable argument. Logical arguments take two forms: 1) inductions, which take the form of examples and 2) deductions, which take the form of enthymemes.[78]

---

[72] Aristotle and Kennedy, *On Rhetoric*, 309.

[73] Aristotle and Kennedy, *On Rhetoric*, 310.

[74] Clearly it is an impossible task to be comprehensive on this enormous topic. However, a few works may be helpful as representative introductions to Aristotle's rhetorical methods. See, e.g., Larry Arnhart, *Aristotle on Political Reasoning: A Commentary on the Rhetoric* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1981); Eugene E. Ryan, *Aristotle's Theory of Rhetorical Argumentation* (Montreal: Bellarmin, 1984); George Alexander Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980); William M. A. Grimaldi, *Aristotle Rhetoric: A Commentary* (2vols.; New York: Fordham University Press, 1980).

[75] Aristotle and Kennedy, *On Rhetoric*, 36 (1355a).

[76] Kennedy is quick to point out, however, that Aristotle *primarily* conceived of rhetoric as manifested in the civic context of public address; see Aristotle and Kennedy, *On Rhetoric*, 36 n. 34.

[77] The following summary is taken from Aristotle and Kennedy, *On Rhetoric*, 14-15.

[78] On the concepts of enthymeme and example, see Arnhart, *Aristotle on Political Reasoning*, 39-40.

According to Aristotle, there are three species of rhetoric, each requiring different skills. If an audience is to be persuaded about a future matter, the method is said to be deliberative/political. If an audience is to be persuaded about a past matter, the method is said to be judicial. If an audience is to be persuaded about a matter where time is not a central issue (though concepts of time are never wholly absent), it is said to be an epideictic matter.[79]

One of the recognized limitations of Aristotelian rhetoric is that, although there are a few exceptions, it is conceived to be primarily used in public discourse about public matters.[80] For this reason, Aristotelian rhetorical analysis appears to be useful to appreciate how a speech/text was heard/understood by an historical, general audience but far less helpful in understanding how ancient scholars might have understood texts, especially complex religious texts that appear to have been composed by decidedly skilled individuals and were likely read, reread and understood quite differently by the literati than by the general public who were illiterate.

Duke and the Aristotelian Rhetorical Approach to Chronicles

Rodney Duke has taken an Aristotelian approach to biblical rhetoric with a particular emphasis in Chronicles. Duke analyzes Chronicles rhetorically "to derive a sweeping view of the whole book of Chronicles."[81] He appropriates a classical Aristotelian rhetorical approach to Chronicles in an attempt to "...gain insight into Chr's character, worldview, theological perspective, purposes and intended audience. Rhetorical features are not extraneous, cosmetic elements tacked on to beautify or deceive. Rather, they constitute the form and content of an act of communication."[82]

Duke uses G. E. Schaefer's dissertation as a model for the primary purpose of Chronicles. Schaefer argued that, "The Chronicler's emphasis on 'seeking the Lord' is to be understood as an invitation extended to the people to experience life on its highest plane."[83] Duke implicitly argues that the intended audience was (all) the people of "Israel" (Judah?),[84] thus rejecting the notion that the primary intended audience was the literati who used the material to legitimize themselves as the newly appointed (by imperial Persia) immigrant ruling elite.[85] Duke contends that "...a good communicator knows that in the demonstration of an argument to a general audience one must present an argument in an appealing manner and must repeat the basic idea several times in different ways. The Chronicler did that."[86]

---

[79] Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*, 1.3. There is more to the species of rhetoric than the element of time. Deliberative is hortatory or dissuasive, forensic is either accusatory or defensive, epideictic has as subject praise or blame. The goal of deliberative rhetoric is whether the action is expedient or harmful, that of forensic is justice/injustice and that of epideictic is dis/honorable. However, Aristotle singles out time (1.3.4) as being the central issue in determining which type of rhetoric one might choose in a given situation.

[80] Aristotle and Kennedy, *On Rhetoric*, 310-311.

[81] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 29.

[82] Rodney K. Duke, "A Rhetorical Approach to Appreciating the Books of Chronicles," in *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture* (ed. Matt Patrick Graham and Steven L. McKenzie; *JSOTSup 263*; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 100-135 [135].

According to Duke (and Schaefer), Chronicles sets up a paradigm (which takes the above λόγος form of πίστεις) from the narratives in 1 Chr 11-2 Chr 9 that treat David and Solomon as idealized kings, who, when they sought YHWH, were blessed and when they did not seek YHWH were punished.[87] The narratives of the Davidic kings from 2 Chr 10-36 "proved" the maxims of blessing vs. punishment in various "historical" circumstances. According to Duke, the enthymematic structure of the blessing/punishment occurs 43 times in this section.[88]

As regards the ἔθος (ethical form of the πίστεις), Duke posits a number of observations. First, the fact that the Chr's work was preserved indicates that the audience accepted its teachings as authoritative.[89] Second, Duke argues that the Chr spoke with an authoritative tone as indicated by the omniscient narrative voice in the text (i.e., the Chr avoided first-person references). Thus, the audience is confronted with

---

[83] G. E. Schaefer, "The Significance of Seeking God in the Purpose of the Chronicler," (Th.D. diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1972) 17-18.

[84] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 50. Duke argues that although the narratives in Chronicles centered on Judah's kings, they tended to affect the whole nation. By implication, then, the Chronicler suggested that the general public of his time was affected by the issues surrounding the leaders of Yehud as they sought to legitimize their political/religious roles in Israel's monarchy.

[85] As suggested by Snyman, "Tis a Vice To Know Him," 97-100.

[86] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 103.

[87] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 84-85, 96-98. The Davidic and Solomonic paradigms consciously contrast the Saulide paradigm in 1 Chr 10 which presents an enthymematic argument why Saul's monarchy failed. 1 Chr 10:13-13 reads, "So שאול Saul died for his trespass which he committed against the LORD, because of the word of the LORD which he did not keep; and also because שאול he asked counsel of a medium, making inquiry of it, and did not inquire of the LORD. Therefore He killed him and turned the kingdom to David the son of Jesse." Duke argues that this is essentially an enthymematic argument that may be expressed as follows:

> The one who does not seek Yahweh will be punished.
> Saul did not seek Yahweh.
> Therefore, Saul was punished (lost his kingdom and his life).

[88] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 102; see also the lists in Duke's Appendix.

[89] Although Duke implies that the larger "community of faith" played an important role in Chronicles being preserved, I think it likely that the role of the "general public" was limited in its ability to significantly influence the acceptance or rejection of texts; the work of preservation was likely to have been the domain of a small group of people connected to the Jerusalem Temple (see more below).

"*the*" (true) history of the past which does not claim to be some "alternative" version.[90] Third, the Chr treated pre-existing (or "traditional") material from Samuel-Kings in a way that did not contradict the older material (even though there are, to be sure, some contradictions in details). The Chr did not seek to demonstrate that the material in Samuel-Kings was wholly inaccurate or corrupt and actually assumes (as in the case of Saul's death) some general familiarity with these traditions, and, at times, the Chr even mimics the narrative material in Sam-Kgs rather closely.[91] Within the rubric of ἔθος Duke also includes "evidence" from the "nonartistic" forms of πίστεις such as lists and genealogies (1 Chr 1-9), citation of sources (alleged prophets and written sources) and direct speech.[92] He concludes that in terms of ethos, the Chr appears to display good sense, an appropriate "tone" towards his material, a good character and good will. Such ethos is supported by the Chr's use of "authoritative" witnesses such as known tradition, voices of kings and prophets and "objective" data.[93]

With regards to the πάθος form of πίστεις used by the Chr, Duke contends that the emotional response encouraged by the text was intended to be unambiguous. The heroic figures of David and Solomon are to be looked upon favorably by the audience and are thus to be emulated where possible. The "wicked" kings in the Davidic line were to be thought of as shameful and their types of behavior avoided. Duke constructs a polarized "emotional" evaluation, based on the "seeking YHWH" or "not seeking YHWH" paradigm that he sees in the accounts of the kings in Chronicles:

> One course produced the good things of life which one desired; the other course produced the things one feared. Experiencing judgment, there is hope for reversal; enjoying the fruit of blessing, there is need for steadfastness. Kings exhort; prophets rebuke. Pride versus shame, emulation versus disdain, desire for the good things of life versus apprehension over the bad, confidence versus anxiety, hope versus despair, and encouragement versus reproof – all such emotions line up with the appropriate character, action, and ideology. The

---

[90] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 108.

[91] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 112.

[92] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 116-138. Duke notes that direct speech was commonly used in Greek historiography to provide added authority to the accounts, especially when the speeches are royal or prophetic. This type of speech implies that the author had direct personal access to royal and prophetic individuals, provided added (perceived) credibility to the stories s/he told.

[93] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 138.

> audience is persuaded emotionally to accept and act on the Chronicler's argument.[94]

A number of issues surface from Duke's work. The first is that an Aristotelian (i.e., persuasive) rhetorical analysis of biblical texts may illuminate major themes that a "general public" historical audience would have been able to grasp during an oral performance of a text. Moreover, Duke has provided considerable evidence that the various components of Aristotle's rhetoric (πίστεις, λόγος, ἔθος, πάθος, enthymeme, etc.) seem to be "at work," consciously or unconsciously, in Chronicles. To my mind, Duke has persuasively argued that an Aristotelian rhetorical-critical approach may bear fruit when applied to biblical (i.e., non-classical) texts.

However, there do seem to be a number of problems as well. For example, Duke argues that the book(s) of Chronicles would have been read to a "general audience".[95] What is ignored is just how this oral/aural performance might have been carried out. In fact, in his introduction, Duke states that, "For the purpose of this book a discussion of the aspects of memory and delivery would be irrelevant, since a written product is being analyzed."[96] Yet, what Duke wants us to imagine is what a *general* ancient audience would have understood Chronicles to mean after *hearing* it.[97] The immediate issue then becomes whether it reasonable to envision that a rhetor would have read Chronicles, from genealogies to Cyrus' edict, to an ancient audience in a single day? Or, if over a number of days (perhaps at a festival), could the audience have made the necessary connections between the various elements Duke analyzes? While the aural attention span for ancient Yehudites is certainly not an established historical fact, one might reasonably assume that if the *entire* book of Chronicles *was* read (which may be a problematic assumption) to an audience, only the most macrostructural arguments in the text might have been understood by a hearing audience, if anything at all.

The other major problem seems to be that because Duke analyzes the entire book of Chronicles, he is left with something of a monolithic view of the characters; they are either described as entirely good or entirely bad, or, at the very least as stereotypical.[98] Moreover, he contends that the Chr portrays these characters so that an audience will perceive them as being unambiguous.[99] This "black or white" position is problematic; Ben Zvi has presented evidence that, on the whole, the Chr goes to considerable lengths to present accounts that, when taken together, are mixed and sometimes ambiguous.[100] He argues that these moral ambiguities reflect reality more accurately and thus created the appearance of a more realistic "historical" account.

---

[94] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 107.
[95] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 103.
[96] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 41.
[97] E.g., Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 30, 34.

The Usefulness of Classical Rhetoric in Historical-Critical Biblical Studies

Where Duke's approach appears to be useful, then, is in understanding how and why *certain pericopes* might have been read publicly to a general audience.[101] Three questions should be asked if one wishes to suggest that portions of Chronicles were ever read aloud to a (public) audience. First, are there clues within the text itself that imply that certain sections are to be demarcated as "rhetorical" units? Second, what is the biblical evidence that indicates that texts were read aloud to audiences and what kind of texts were they? Third, is a "rhetorical situation" implied where public audiences are discussed (i.e., does the audience appear to be convinced of something upon hearing a given text)?

Leslie Allen has studied the first issue, following the work of a number of scholars,[102] and has concluded that certain "kerygmatic" units[103] are perceptible in Chronicles.[104] He has suggested that three devices are used to demarcate rhetorical/kerygmatic units: inclusio,[105] recurring motifs[106] and contrasted motifs.[107]

---

[98] Rodney K. Duke, "A Model for a Theology of Biblical Historical Narratives: Proposed and Demonstrated with the Books of Chronicles," in *History and Interpretation: Essays in Honour of John H. Hayes* (ed. Jeffrey K. Kuan; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 65–77.

[99] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 147.

[100] Ehud Ben Zvi, "A Sense of Proportion: An Aspect of the Theology of the Chronicler," *SJOT* 9 (1995): 37-51.

[101] Of course, this presupposes that a literate (and thus elite) rhetor orally performed the text at his discretion.

[102] Including H G M. Williamson, "Sources and Redaction in the Chronicler's Genealogy of Judah," *JBL* 98 (1979): 351-359 who argued that the central part of the genealogy of Judah had been reworked into a chiastic structure by the Chr and Raymond B. Dillard, "The Literary Structure of the Chronicler's Solomon Narrative," *JSOT* 30 (1984): 85-93 who argued that the account of Solomon's reign in 2 Chr 1-9 is an extended chiasm with the double center being 1) the dedication of the Temple, including two theophanies and 2) the favorable response of YHWH to Solomon and to the people.

[103] I.e., portions of the text that could have been orated to a public audience.

[104] Leslie C. Allen, "Kerygmatic Units in 1 & 2 Chronicles," *JSOT* 41 (1988): 21-36.

[105] Allen, "Kerygmatic Units," 23-26.

[106] Allen, "Kerygmatic Units," 26-28.

[107] Allen, "Kerygmatic Units," 28-33.

Allen suggests that the inclusio is represented in 1 Chr 11-2 Chr 9 (the account of the united monarchy) by the use of the root סבב "to turn/go around." In 1 Chr 10:14, YHWH יסב "turns" the kingdom over to David because Saul did not דרש "seek" YHWH, marking the beginning of the (glory years of the) united monarchy. In 2 Chr 10:15 a נסבה "turn of events" caused by God (foretold to Ahijah the Shilonite prophet in 2 Chr 9:29) splits Israel and Judah, marking the end of both Solomon's glory and the unity of Israel/Judah. Allen argues that another inclusio may be found in 1 Chr 23:1-29:30. He notes the apparent relationship between ודויד זקן ושבע ימים וימלך את שלמה בנו "And when David reached old age, he made his son Solomon king" in 23:1 and וימת בשיבה טובה שבע ימים עשר וכבוד וימלך שלמה בנו "And he died in a ripe old age, full of days, riches and honor; and his son Solomon reigned" in 29:28. This inclusio would suggest that David's plans for Solomon's reign (both military and cultic) were designed as a rhetorical unit. Allen sees another inclusio to mark Hezekiah's exemplary pious reign in 2 Chr 29:1-31:20. In 29:2, at the beginning of the regnal account, the monarch is described by the phrase ויעש הישר בעיני יהוה "he did right in the eyes of YHWH" and in 31:20, at the conclusion of the narrative, his reign is described similarly as ויעש הטוב והישר והאמת לפני יהוה "he did what was good and what was right before YHWH." Nestled within the reign of Hezekiah, in the account of Hezekiah's "defeat" of Sennacherib, Allen finds another inclusio. In 2 Chr 31:21, the narrator praises Hezekiah, בכל לבבו עשה והצליח "he did (everything) wholeheartedly and he prospered" and in 32:30, after the victory over Sennacherib, the narrator praises Hezekiah again, ויצלח יחזקיהו בכל מעשהו "and Hezekiah prospered in all that he did."

Allen argues that recurring motifs, in chiastic form, may also demarcate certain pericopes as rhetorical units. As an example, he argues that the movement of the ark to Jerusalem (1 Chr 13-15) falls into four episodes with each containing some form of the root פרץ "break out" and that the episodes form an ABB'A' chiasm. The first movement (A) in 13:1-4 describes David's initiation of the project. In verse 2, David encourages "all Israel" that if it is ומן יהוה אלהינו נפרצה "from YHWH our God, let us go/break out" (in reference to enlisting everyone's help in the project). The second movement (B) in 13:5-14 describes the failed attempt and includes the etiological phrases in v. 11 פרץ יהוה פרץ בעזא...ויקרא למקום ההוא פרץ עזא "YHWH broke out against Uzzah…and he called that place Perez-uzzah." The third movement (B') in 14:1-17 describes David's establishment as king and his defeat of the Philistines (apparently to offset his failure with the ark) and includes the etiological phrases in 14:11 "(they came) to Baal-parazim (בעל פרצים)...God has broken through my enemies by my hand like the breakthrough of waters (כפרץ מים)...they called the name of that place Baal-parazim (בעל פרצים)."[108] The fourth movement (A') in 15:1-29 describes the successful movement of the ark from the house of Obed-Edom to Jerusalem. Verse 15:13 provides the final link in the chiasmus פרץ יהוה אלהינו בנו "YHWH our God outburst on us." In 13:2 "all Israel" decides to break out to gather everyone, including the Levites, to move the ark. For reasons unknown, the Levites do not carry the ark. In 15:13, prior to the second attempt, the Levites are blamed, in part, for YHWH's outburst. The verse serves as a warning to not repeat the same mistake twice. Part of the message to the Chr's community seems to be that, in certain instances, a human "outbreak" (or mobilization of resources) even if done with righteous intentions, may precipitate a divine "outbreak" if certain precautions are not taken.[109]

Finally, Allen argues that contrasting (or polarizing) motifs may demarcate certain pericopes. Allen cites a number of examples, one of which is found in 2 Chr 18:1-34, the account of Micaiah, Ahab and Jehoshaphat. According to Allen, the passage is controlled by the theme of manipulation, both human and divine, and occurs in four movements. The first movement is 18:1-3 which describes Jehoshaphat's alliance with Ahab. In 18:2 the narrator contends that ויסיתהו "he (Ahab) enticed him (Jehoshaphat)" to wage war with Ramoth Gilead.[110] The second movement is 18:4-27 which describes Jehoshaphat's "pious" request that the kings first seek divine counsel prior to any military action, including the false prophets' positive response and Micaiah's negative response to the question of war. In 18:19-21 the root פתה "entice" (a synonym of סות when the former is used in the Piel[111]) occurs three times in a divine council where YHWH asks who would go and deceive Ahab, a spirit offers and is told by YHWH to go and do so:

---

[108] It is curious that Allen ignores the קרא "naming" of the places as part of his keyword motif structure, as it would certainly serve to bolster his overall argument.

[109] It should be noted that Allen compares 13:11 and 14:11 to 2 Sam 6:8 and 2 Sam 5:20 respectively; however, while not damaging to his case, I find this exegetical move unnecessary.

[110] According to *HALOT*, the root סות in the Hifil connotes a negative, misleading action; cf. esp. 1 Chr 21:1. However, see below where YHWH's סות action results in Jehoshaphat's salvation.

[111] See פתה in *HALOT*.

מי יפתה את אחאב "who will entice Ahab?" (v. 19); אפתנו "I will entice him" (v. 20); תפתה "You will entice" (v. 21). In addition, the outcome of the divine deception is not ambiguous; וגם תוכל "and moreover, you will succeed." The third movement is in 18:28-34 where the failure of the military operation is described, including the death of Ahab and the salvation of Jehoshaphat who, at the last moment, cried to YHWH. As a result, YHWH hears Jehoshaphat and ויסיתם "he enticed them (diverted them away) from him." The result of this pericope is that Ahab the enticer is divinely enticed himself to his own death.[112] Moreover, YHWH may manipulate humans as he wishes, sometimes to their destruction and sometimes to their salvation.

One (perhaps obvious) homiletical device that Allen does not suggest is the series of regnal statements that precede and end a monarch's reign. Beginning with Rehoboam, these regnal statements are rather regular and may suggest that each reign could have been read as a rhetorical unit. Typically, the regnal formula begins with במלכו "when he became king"; the morphology is remarkably consistent from Rehoboam to the end of Chronicles – 17 times the verb occurs as a Qal infinitive construct with a 3ms ending.[113] Moreover, the end of a king's reign usually contains the root שכב "sleep/lie down" (9:31; 12:16; 13:23; 16:13-14; 21:1; 26:2,23; 27:9; 28:27; 32:33; 33:20). The verbal roots of both מלך "rule" (at the beginning) and שכב "lie down/die" (at the end) occur in the reigns of Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah and Manasseh. Josiah's reign begins with במלכו and ends with the root קבר "bury." Joahaz, Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin all begin with "when he became king" and end with deportation, denoted by either בוא "come/go" or הלך "go/walk." If the beginnings and endings of the monarch's reigns may be seen as formulaic, it would appear, then, that each king's reign after Solomon could have been used as a rhetorical/homiletical unit.

While the examples above are certainly not an exhaustive selection of homiletical pericopes in Chronicles, they may be considered representative of a literary phenomenon that occurs throughout the book. Therefore, a number of implications may be drawn. While the apparent kerygmatic units noted above cannot be conclusively

---

[112] It appears that Ahab was trying to get Jehoshaphat killed; cf. v. 29.

[113] The exceptions are Abijah and Asa whose reigns begin with וימלך "and he was king" and Amaziah and Hezekiah whose reigns begin with מלך "he was king."

"proven" to have been used by a rhetor to an aural audience during the Persian period, they suggest that certain stories in Chronicles *could* have been read/heard in these ways. Thus, Chronicles seems to have a number of literary devices that would suggest to a reader that certain sections could/should be read with certain emphases. Such an understanding of Chronicles implies that these "kerygmatic" units could have been read aloud to an ancient audience.

As to the second and third questions regarding textual evidence of ancient Israelite/Judahite "rhetorical situations" that involved a public audience, a number of observations may be made. First, there seems to be good evidence from certain biblical sources that texts were indeed read to the public, from time to time. Such texts also seem to imply that these audiences were often being persuaded to adopt particular beliefs. Second, these texts describe situations where a rhetor read publicly. Third, the rhetor usually determined the time/place of the oral performance (though sometimes it occurs at pre-ordained festal events). Fourth, a few texts are not only read but interpreted by the rhetor (or his aides) to ensure that the audience understood the text in a particular way.

For example, in Ex 24:3-7 Moses, after receiving various laws from YHWH, writes them down and then קרא "reads" it באזני העם "to the ears of the people" who then agree to the terms of the law by announcing כל הדברים אשר דבר יהוה נעשה "all the words YHWH has spoken we will do" (24:3) and כל אשר דבר יהוה נעשה ונשמע "all YHWH has spoken we will do and we will be obedient" (24:7). The verbs עשה "do" and שמע "obey" indicate the agreement of the audience to adhere to the laws of Moses given by YHWH. As such, the ancient Israelites are depicted as having been convinced to adopt "new" divine laws that would henceforth govern certain aspects of their lives. The audience is thus depicted as having been persuaded by an oral performance of a text; a situation that was not "right" has been made right by the divine and his rhetorical agent, Moses.

In Deut 31:11-13, the reading of תורה "law" to the people was to occur every seven years during the Feast of Tabernacles. Two of the roots (קרא "read" and אזן "ear") are identical to those in Ex 24:3-7 but כל ישראל "all Israel" is used instead of העם "the people." Moreover, "all Israel" is described as consisting of

האנשים והנשים והטף וגרך "the men and women and children and strangers." V. 13 describes the rhetorical intent of such public reading: ובניהם אשר לא ידעו ישמעו ולמדו ליראה את יהוה אלהיכם "so that their sons who did not know will hear and they will learn to fear YHWH your god." In this "rhetorical situation" the sons' ignorance of the Torah of YHWH is what engenders public readings that are intended to persuade these sons to fear YHWH and obey his Torah.

Josh 8:34-35 describes Joshua (at the renewal of the Sinai covenant at Mt. Ebal) as קרא "reading" תורה to כל קהל ישראל "all the assembly of Israel" including והנשים והטף והגר ההלך בקרבם "the women and children and strangers living among them." In this pericope, הברכה והקללה "the blessing and the curse" are mentioned indicating rewards or punishment for obeying or disobeying the תורה of Moses, given to him by YHWH. The mention of either positive or negative consequences for "all the assembly of Israel" creates a rhetorical situation where an attempt is made to persuade an audience based on the hope of reward or the threat of punishment.

According to Chr, (2 Chr 17:7-9) Jehoshaphat instituted an explicit program of "teaching" (Piel form of the root למד) ספר תורת יהוה the "book of the Law of YHWH" throughout Judah to all the people. This passage is significant because such instruction is from a written document, and involves both royal שר "prince(s)" and cultic officials הלוים "the Levites" and הכהנים "the priests;" apparently demonstrating a unified program of elites teaching the public the laws of YHWH. Moreover, it is, perhaps, significant that this institution falls in the third year of the monarch's reign, which may symbolize an event that the Chr understood as especially important.[114]

In both accounts of Josiah's reforms (2 Kgs 23:1-3; 2 Chr 34:30-33), Josiah is described as קרא "reading" באזניהם "to the ears" of everyone למקטן ועד גדול "from the smallest to the greatest." According to the Kings account, the people appear to take part in the covenant (v. 3) voluntarily וַיַּעֲמֹד (Qal); according to the Chr's account (v. 32-33), the king causes the people to enter into the covenant וַיַּעֲמֵד (Hif) and to serve YHWH וַיַּעֲבֵד (Hif). At least the first account seems to involve an element of persuasion; the second seems to describe forced compliance.

---

[114] The third year appears to be symbolically important in postexilic literature; emphasizing important events related to monarchies (cf. Esth 1:3; Dan 1:1, 5; 8:1; 10:1; 2 Chr 11:17).

The book of Nehemiah (Neh. 8:3, 8, 18; 9:3; 13:1) describes Ezra who קרא התורה "read the Torah" to כל העם "all the people" (including both men and women) throughout the seventh month. Torah is read for seven days (8:2, 18) during the New Year's festival[115] and on the Day of Atonement (9:1). The rhetorical situation appears to be explicitly persuasive in intent. Upon hearing (the translation/explanation of) the Torah of God the audience is described as בכה "weeping" (v. 8:8-9). They were obviously concerned that what they heard in the text was not part of their religio-socio *realia*. One of the problems was that the people had been ignoring/were not aware of the Festival of Booths. Once the text had been read, the people are described as taking immediate action to observe the proper festal rites (9:13-17). In chapters 9-10, the people confessed their חטאתיהם "sins" (v. 2-3), and bound themselves by oath to the Torahof God (10:28-29) which involved commitment to a number of issues, including racial purity (10:30-39). In Neh 13:1 נקרא בספר משה באזני העם "they read the Book of Moses to the ears of the people," though no specific occasion or rhetors are cited for this public oration.[116]

In Jer 36:6-13, Baruch is commanded by Jeremiah to קרא "read" a scroll containing Jeremiah's words (given him by YHWH) באזני העם "to the ears of the people." According to the story, the rhetorical situation is that Judah's persistent apostasy would cause her destruction at the hands of the Babylonians (36:29). Since Jeremiah is not welcome at the Temple, he sends Baruch to קרא "read" to the people. The people are persuaded by it and קראו "proclaimed" a fast before YHWH (36:9) in express response to the scroll.

What becomes clear here is not the historicity of the events as described by each text but rather that there are many ancient biblical traditions of public (including men, women, strangers, children and multiple social spheres) readings of scripture[117] that were familiar by at least some point during the Persian Period. Moreover, various genres appear to have been read including law and prophecy. It is also clear that, in each instance, a human agent of the divine was necessary to read the text, and, at times, to interpret it. These rhetors were of various types: prophets, kings and scribes. The rhetor, as agent of YHWH, initiated the rhetorical performance; the time, place and circumstance of each was never arbitrary. Sometimes, texts that appear to be similar were used for very different reasons at different times in Israel/Judah's "history." In the examples above, Torah is used to bind aliens to the community in Deut and Josh while in Nehemiah, Torah is used to expunge foreigners from the community. Of course, the interpretation of texts is usually left up to the rhetor, not unlike our modern Temple staff who interprets biblical texts (sometimes in ways very different from each other) for congregations today.[118]

---

[115] H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah* (WBC 16; Waco: Word Books, 1985), 287. It appears that a number of religious events occurred throughout this month, which included the Feast of Trumpets, Feast of Tabernacles and the Day of Atonement (cf. Lev 23:23–26; Deut 31:10–13).

[116] Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, 385, argues that the lack of occasion suggests that the public reading was part of a regular occurrence of liturgical performance.

[117] I am aware that the term is anachronistic but will retain it here for simplicity.

---

[118] On these issues, see also Michael A. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 107-143.

Introduction to Socio-Economic Context of Yehud in the Persian Period[119]

In attempting to use two types of rhetorical criticism to understand two different Yehudite audiences during the Persian period, it is important to sketch some sort of picture of what life might have been like at this time. While it is true that less is known about the Persian period than other eras due to a lack of both textual and material evidence, I would argue that enough is known about the period to allow some insight into the milieu that gave rise to the book of Chronicles and how it might have been read, reread and heard in Yehud during the late Persian Period.

The Persian Empire and Yehud: Center and Periphery

To begin to understand Yehud during the Persian period is to understand both in the context of center and periphery.[120] From 539 BCE when the Babylonians fell before Cyrus until 332 BCE when Alexander's armies conquered the Levant, Israel/Judah were under the control of the Achaemenid Empire. In the Hebrew Bible, the books of Ezra and Nehemiah provide traditions that demonstrate the effects of the Persians on many facets of Judah's society. However, Grabbe notes that reconstructing the history of the early Persian period is precarious. In a now well-known quote, he warns scholars, "...we should cease to write the history of Judah in the first part of the Persian period by lightly paraphrasing the book of Ezra, with the occasional Elephantine papyrus tossed in plus a spoonful or two of Olmstead for leavening."[121]

---

[119] Interest in Persian period Yehud over the last 15 years has engendered a great deal of research. Obviously, it is beyond the scope of the present introduction to interact with all of it; nevertheless, a number of representative works might be mentioned. Perhaps the most important recent overall work on the history of the Achaemenid Empire is Pierre Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire* (trans. Peter T. Daniels; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2002). For an introduction to the geo-political history of Judea under Persian rule, see Michael Avi-Yonah, *The Holy Land: From the Persian to the Arab Conquests (536 B.C. to A.D. 640): A Historical Geography* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1966), 11-31. For an introduction to the material culture and demography of Yehud, see Charles E. Carter, *The Emergence of Yehud in the Persian Period: A Social and Demographic Study* (eds. David Clines and Philip Davies; JSOTSup 294; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998); Oded Lipschits, "Demographic Changes in Judah Between the Seventh and the Fifth Centuries B.C.E.," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period* (ed. Oded Lipschits and Joseph Blenkinsopp; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 323-376; Joel Weinberg, *The Citizen-Temple Community* (trans. Daniel L. Smith-Christopher; JSOTSup 15; Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1992); Ephraim Stern, *Material Culture of the Land of the Bible in the Persian Period: 538-332 B.C* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1982). For an introduction to the archaeological context of Second Temple Studies during the Persian period, see Eric M. Meyers, "Second Temple Studies in the Light of Recent Archaeology: Part I: The Persian and Hellenistic Periods," *CurBS* 2 (1994): 25-42. For an introduction to the numismatics and the implications of coinage in Yehud, see Stephen N. Gerson, "Fractional Coins of Judea and Samaria in the Fourth Century BCE," *NEA* 64 (2001): 106-121 and John Wilson Betlyon, "The Provincial Government of Persian Period Judea and the Yehud Coins," *JBL* 105 (1986): 633-642. For an overview of both written and archaeological sources, see Lester L. Grabbe, *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian* (2vols.; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 27-119. See Amelie Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East* (ed. Fergus Millar; 2 vols.; Routledge History of the Ancient World; New York: Routledge, 1995), 647-701 and Richard N. Frye, *The History of Ancient Iran* (Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft: Abt. 3; Teil 7; München: C.H. Beck, 1984), 87-135 for a general reconstruction of the Achaemenid Empire. For an overview of recent discussions regarding the Achaemenid context as an heuristic device in understanding biblical literature, see Philip R. Davies, ed. *Second Temple Studies 1: Persian Period* (JSOTSup 117; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991); Tamara Cohn Eskenazi and Kent Harold Richards, eds., *Second Temple Studies 2: Temple and Community in the Persian Period* (JSOTSup 175; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994); James W. Watts, ed. *Persia and Torah: The Theory of Imperial Authorization of the Pentateuch* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001); Kenneth G. Hoglund, *Achaemenid Imperial Administration in Syria-Palestine and the Missions of Ezra and Nehemiah* (ed. David L. Petersen; SBLDS 125; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992) For an introduction to how the Achaemenid Empire affected the social make-up of Yehud, see Jon L. Berquist, *Judaism in Persia's Shadow: A Social and Historical Approach* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995).

[120] This is the approach of Berquist, *Judaism in Persia's Shadow*, 241-250.

Strategies of the Persian Imperial Center

Hoglund[122] has identified four aspects of Achaemenid policy that seem to have affected the province[123] of Yehud: ruralization, commercialization, militarization and ethnic collectivization. To these I would add two others: the rhetoric of "cosmic harmony" and the establishment of local temples as imperial administrative instruments.

Hoglund argues that (all) empires institute a series of mutually beneficial mechanisms to exert influence over a region. The first is ruralization, a deliberate decentralization of the population in the former Judean territories which followed the repatriated Judeans to the district of Yehud. Hoglund cites archaeological evidence, a 25% increase in Judean rural villages in the early Persian period which seems to reflect a deliberate process of ruralization.[124] He argues that these villages were considered to be economically valuable to the Empire because of the potential tribute (likely "in-kind") that could be collected from previously underutilized agricultural areas, which would help to pay for the Empire's growing administration.[125] Lipshits' analysis of various archaeological sites of the Persian period seems to support Hoglund's thesis; he sees three major changes in settlement patterns in the transition from the Late Iron Age to the Persian period:

---

[121] Lester L. Grabbe, "Reconstructing History from the Book of Ezra," in *Second Temple Studies 1: The Persian Period* (ed. P. R. Davies; *JSOTSup 117*; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 98-106.

[122] Kenneth G. Hoglund, "The Achaemenid Context," in *Second Temple Studies 1: Persian Period* (ed. P. R. Davies; *JSOTSup 117*; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 54-72.

[123] According to Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East*, 689, the entire Persian Empire was divided into satrapies (which seem to have been further divided into provinces); the Empire appointed political rulers as its agents called "satraps." According to Grabbe, *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian*, 83-84, Judah appears to have been one of several provinces of the satrapy of Ebir-nari ("beyond the river Euphrates") which included all the land west of the Euphrates up to Egypt. Grabbe argues that the basic governmental geo-political divisions of Palestine seem to have begun under Assyrian rule and were continued and developed by the Babylonians and later continued and developed further under the Persians. See also Carter, *The Emergence of Yehud in the Persian Period*, 84-87 for a convenient summary of four geo-political reconstructions of Yehud. See also Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, 63-67.

[124] Hoglund, "The Achaemenid Context," 57.

[125] Hoglund, "The Achaemenid Context," 59.

1. A drastic decline in the importance of larger sites.
2. A marked increase in the importance of the medium-sized sites, which were larger than 5 dunams.[126]
3. A significant increase in the location and importance of the sites smaller than 5 dunams.[127]

The second imperial mechanism was the development of long-distance trade. Hoglund argues that fifth century Athenian ceramics found in places like Bethel and Beth-Gubrin point to a commercialization of Yehud.[128] This economic development strategy was encouraged by the Empire; it produced multiple tax revenue streams; road taxes, central market taxes and monetary exchange taxes which are lucrative because they require relatively little expenditure by the Empire.[129] In addition, an economy that is, in part, dependent on trade, is an economy that is less self-sufficient and requires continued allegiance to the Empire that controls these various trade vectors. A trading economy is also an economy that eventually requires coinage. Coinage acts not only as an expedited means of trade but as a symbolic presence of Empire in the communities that are dominated by it.[130]

A third Achaemenid imperial strategy was increased militarization; new fortresses were built under the Achaemenid system and the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt in the mid fifth century BCE (Neh 2-7). Hoglund argues that this represented a defensive strategy to the threat from the Athenians for control of a portion of the eastern

---

[126] According to Lipshits [326], the most recent ethnoarchaeological research (done primarily within rural Arab villages during the British Mandate) suggests a coefficient of 25 persons per dunam.

[127] Lipschits, "Demographic Changes in Judah," 353.

[128] See also the extensive list of imported Greek ware in Palestine in Stern, *Material Culture*, 283-286.

[129] On issues of the construction of roads and bridges within the Achaemenid Empire, see Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, 357-364.

[130] See, e.g., Gerson, "Fractional Coins," 112. It is important to note that the Y1 and Y2 coins, minted in the early Persian period and used in Yehud during the Persian period, contain at least three images that symbolize the importance of the Empire: 1) the Persian King/eagle suggests the Achaemenid monarch's imperial dominance; 2) the Athenian owl suggests the importance of trade between satrapies; 3) the coins are stamped with the name "Yehud;" this "(re)naming" of the province further suggests the Empire's hegemonic position.

Mediterranean arising out of the second Egyptian revolt in 464-450 BCE.[131] The militarization of the area would have included some active imperial garrisons which would have had to have been paid for by the provinces (i.e., through taxation) which they were "protecting" from (the Empire's) enemies.

Fourth, Hoglund suggests that ethnic collectivization – the process of forming ethnically distinct groups within the Empire – was employed to solidify communities that were repatriated from Babylon. Suffice it to say, repatriation of a people group is not without cost to both Empire and the people who are being repatriated. Ethnic groups would be taken by the empire to an underutilized land and provided with military protection to ensure production. However, the land only remained theirs if they remained loyal to the Empire; disloyalty would deprive the population of access to their land; they were coerced into remaining dependent on the Empire to survive.

A fifth strategy employed was the imperial rhetoric of "cosmic harmony." Cosmic harmony was a significant aspect of the Persian Empire. In contradistinction from the Assyrian and Babylonian Empires whose imperial propaganda promoted a civilized center and a chaotic periphery which was controlled and managed by the Empire's superior military forces, the Persians' attempted to promote a vision of harmony via the rhetoric (both visual and literal) of a harmonized relationship between the center and periphery.[132] This is not to say that violence was absent, nor that conflict did not exist between the Empire and its subjugated subjects;[133] on the contrary, rhetoric was merely a cheaper way for the Empire to maintain a level of control similar to that enjoyed by the Babylonians and Assyrians. Martial law is particularly expensive; if an Empire can convince its peoples to accept the Empire's ideology of the present as being better than the past and that the present state of events is, in fact, according to the wishes of the "highest" god(s), imperial control is much easier to maintain.[134]

---

[131] The political circumstances surrounding the rebuilding of the Jerusalem walls are controversial. While Hoglund sees Nehemiah's program as one supported (commanded?) by the Persian administration because of the Egyptian revolt, others such as Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, 578-579 suggest that the rebuilding program was an overextension of the wishes of the Persians; the rebuilding of the walls was seen as an act of rebellion. He argues that the Judahites only had permission to rebuild the Temple and that an "overfortification" would encourage the cessation of tribute to the Empire (cf. Ezra 4). On the archaelogical evidence for the rebuilding of the Jerusalem walls during the Persian period, see Yigal Shiloh, "The City of David Archaeological Project: The Third Season-1980," *BA* 44 (1981): 161-170 [164].

[132] One example of such imperial propaganda was the imperial art of the Persian Empire which communicated a message of harmony and peace over and above militaristic violence and subjugation (as compared to former Mesopotamian imperial artwork). See Carl Nylander, "Achaemenid Imperial Art," in *Power and Propaganda: A Symposium on Ancient Empires* (ed. Mogens Trolle Larsen; *Copenhagen Studies in Assyriology 7*; Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1979), 345-360; see also Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire* , 171.

[133] See esp. Amélie Kuhrt, "The Cyrus Cylinder and Achaemenid Imperial Policy," *JSOT* 25 (1983): 83-97. For a more generalized discussion of imperial political struggles between the center and the periphery in world empires, see also S. N. Eisenstadt, *The Political Systems of Empires* (London: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), 17-18.

The sixth strategy is an extension of the fifth: localized temples were supported by the Empire to provide the repatriated elite with a tangible center of power which would remain distinct from neighboring peoples yet dependent on (and thus loyal to) the Empire.[135] Thus, the Temple also became a place where political and religious roles would coalesce (cf., e.g., Ezra 7; Zech 3-4). In addition to governors, the high priest seems to have been appointed by the Empire.[136] According to Trotter, in return, a central Temple served the Empire in several important ways.[137] First, the Temple would act as an ideological power center of political/religious ritual that would streamline and strengthen relations between the imperial and colonial administrations. Second, the

---

[134] On the various non-militaristic means the Persian Empire used to exact control over its territories, see Berquist, *Judaism in Persia's Shadow*, 133-135. For an example of the literary rhetoric of Cyrus, see Kuhrt, "The Cyrus Cylinder and Achaemenid Imperial Policy," 86; Cyrus (in the first person) describes himself as being "the son" of Marduk (patron god of Babylon). Moreover, it is "at Marduk's command all enthroned kings of all regions bring tribute and kiss Cyrus' feet in Babylon." It is significant that this type of Persian Imperial rhetoric was embedded in two traditions within the Hebrew Bible. 2 Chr. 36:22-23, "Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia in order to fulfill the word of YHWH by the mouth of Jeremiah YHWH stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying, "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, `YHWH, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may YHWH his God be with him, and let him go up!'" Ezra 1:1-4, "Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of YHWH by the mouth of Jeremiah, YHWH stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying: "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, `YHWH, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and He has appointed me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. `Whoever there is among you of all his people, may his God be with him! Let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah and rebuild the house of YHWH, the god of Israel; he is the God who is in Jerusalem. `Every survivor, at whatever place he may live, let the men of that place support him with silver and gold, with goods and cattle, together with a freewill offering for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.'" The writer(s) of Chronicles and Ezra both supported and promulgated the ideology of Cyrus as being the divinely ordained monarch sent (here YHWH in the place of Marduk) to restore cosmic harmony upon the earth.

[135] On the issue of the relationship of the Temple to the society of Yehud, see Joseph Blenkinsopp, "Temple and Society in Achaemenid Judah," in *Second Temple Studies 1: Persian Period* (ed. P. R. Davies; *JSOTSup 117*; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 22-53. See also Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, 510-511. See also David Janzen, "Politics, Settlement and Temple Community in Persian-Period Yehud," *CBQ* 64, no. 3 (2002): 490-510; he argues (I think, unconvincingly) that the Persians were "forced" to deal with the concerns and interests of the "Jerusalem assembly" (a religio-political entity which he likens to a powerful interest group and which he believes was *not* established by the Persians as part of the imperial satrapal administration). In my opinion, Janzen overestimates two aspects of the Jerusalemite elite: their economic provenance (at the very least to the degree that their wealth that was not bound to the larger economy of the Empire) and their ability as a political "special interest group" to coerce the Empire into taking seriously their interests.

[136] Paula M. McNutt, *Reconstructing the Society of Ancient Israel* (ed. Douglas A. Knight; Library of Ancient Israel; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), 206-211.

[137] James M. Trotter, "Was the Second Jerusalem Temple a Primarily Persian Project?," *SJOT* 15 (2001): 276-294 [292-292].

Temple would act as a center of imperial fiscal administration for both the local elite and the imperial government. Moreover, Schaper has argued that the second Temple in Jerusalem was one of many local temples both supported and used by the Achaemenids as an instrument of economic administration/exploitation.[138] He distinguishes between two types of Temple taxes; those payable *through* sanctuaries (i.e., to the central imperial administration) and those payable *to* sanctuaries (i.e., to support the priests, Levites and other members of the Temple hierarchy). He argues that (silver as opposed to "in-kind") taxes were collected under the rubric of the "king's chest," an institution devised earlier by Nabonidus and taken over by the Achaemenids. A portion of these monies would have been handed over directly to the Persian Emperor as tribute.[139] Third, by situating the Temple construction within the local religious traditions of the Yehudites, the Empire presents their imperial administrative center as religious restoration rather than imperial occupation. Fourth, the Temple would provide a center of textual production that would maintain the imperial-colonial relationship. Fifth, the construction of the Temple would bind the community to the Empire, an important consideration in light of the distance between Jerusalem and the Persian center as well as the proximity of Jerusalem to Egypt and the ubiquitous potential for capricious satraps who were primarily driven by local (not imperial) interests.[140]

A Small, Poor, Peripheral Yehud: Whence the Literati and the Production of Literature?

The imperial strategies described above would seem to paint an excessively rosy economic picture of the repatriation of the Judeans from Babylon. However, archaeological evidence suggests that Yehud was a small and poor province at least until the late Persian period when the Empire's grip on power began to slip. Whatever aid the Empire gave in support of Yehud, it certainly took back (and more) in tribute (cf. Neh 5:1-19).[141]

---

[138] Joachim Schaper, "The Jerusalem Temple as an Instrument of the Achaemenid Fiscal Administration," *VT* 45 (1995): 528-539.

[139] Cf. 2 Kgs 12 and 2 Chr 24 and the ארון "ark/chest" built by Joash that was placed at the Temple to collect money from the people of Judah; a tradition that seems to reflect the practice of taxation vis-à-vis the "king's chest" (though no mention is made here of Persian tribute as it purports to describe the monarchy prior to imperial domination).

[140] See Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, 868.

[141] On the issues of the Persian Empire, its tribute economy and the effects on its satrapies, see esp. Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, 388-471.

Carter estimates that the population of Judah during the Persian I and II periods was between 13,350 and 20,650 respectively.[142] He suggests that the population of Jerusalem during both periods never exceeded 1500 persons (7.3% of the total population)[143] and ultimately asks a pointed question, "If Yehud was this small and this poor, how could the social and religious elite sustain the literary activity attributed to the Persian period?"[144] Carter answers his question in the affirmative, stating that the Jerusalemite literati would have had substantial support from the agrarian peasants and, from time to time, when necessary, from the Empire itself.[145] Even though Persian authorities extracted the maximum possible revenue from Yehud, it was in their best interests to ensure that Yehud (and Jerusalem, as its administrative center) was secure enough to help secure the western frontier of the Achaemenid Empire.[146] Such economic security (however provisional) would have allowed for the development of a class of Jerusalem literati supported by the Temple.

Ben Zvi has considered these issues in more detail. He argues that the number of literati in Achaemenid Jerusalem was not only adequate for the production of literature but proportionately higher than would be expected in other contemporary societies and that this argument presupposes two things: 1) the financial wherewithal to support the production of "high" literary art (including the education and sustenance of those involved in writing, reading and copying) and 2) a need for such activity at that time. He suggests, in accordance with the evidence above, that Persian period II was financially conducive to the production of biblical literature; as the militarization and commercialization of Yehud increased, the rise of a service sector would have made possible the activities of a literate elite.[147] The "need" for the production of literature may have been consistent with a general trend in the Achaemenid Empire towards the authority of the written word.[148] If this trend did occur, the literati of the Jerusalem Temple would have, over time, become indispensable in their role as brokers of divine/written knowledge (cf. Neh 8) in light of the low literacy rate in agrarian societies at that time.[149]

---

[142] Although it does not affect my overall argument here, it should be pointed out that Lipschits, "Demographic Changes in Judah," 359-360 disagrees with Carter's distinction between Persian period I and Persian period II. He argues that Carter's model is based solely on theory and is not sustainable based on the material culture of that time and period (consisting primarily of pottery shards) whose archaeological analysis does not "(e)nable more than a general dating for the Persian period, and even this has great limitations in identification of the pottery indicative of the period."

[143] Carter, *The Emergence of Yehud in the Persian Period*, 201.

[144] Carter, *The Emergence of Yehud in the Persian Period*, 285. Other scholars have asked the same question and affirmed that the "golden years" of Hebrew literary genius occurred during this period; e.g., Ehud Ben Zvi, "The Urban Center of Jerusalem and the Development of the Literature of the Hebrew Bible," in *Urbanism in Antiquity* (ed. Walter E. Aufrecht et al.; *JSOTSup 244*; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 194-209 and Giovanni Garbini, "Hebrew Literature in the Persian Period," in *Second Temple Studies 2: Temple and Community in the Persian Period* (ed. Tamara Cohn Eskenazi and Kent Harold Richards; *JSOTSup 175*; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 180-188; Philip R. Davies, *In Search of 'Ancient Israel'* (JSOTSup 148; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992). Others have asked the question and responded in the negative; e.g., Sara Japhet, "Can the Persian Period Bear the Burden? Reflections on the Origins of Biblical History," in *Proceedings of the Twelfth World Congress of Jewish Studies: Jerusalem, July 29-August 5, 1997: Division A* (ed. Ron Margolin; Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1999), 35-45; Iain W. Provan, "Ideologies, Literary and Critical: Reflections on Recent Writing on the History of Israel," *JBL* 114 (1995): 585-606.

[145] It is significant to note that Lipschits, "Demographic Changes in Judah," 364-366, argues that the population of Jerusalem "and its environs" would have peaked at 3000 at the height of the Persian period, which, if accepted, would double the economic viability of Carter's population of Persian period Jerusalem.

[146] Carter, *The Emergence of Yehud in the Persian Period*, 288-294.

Chronicles, the Literati and "The Public Transcript"

Apart from the general trend towards "the written word," the immigrant priesthood (who made up at least part of the Jerusalemite literati) needed to demonstrate legitimacy based on "historical" continuity. Berquist places the writing of the book of Chronicles in the middle-to-late Persian period and at the center of the priesthood's claim over the "true religion" of "Israel." He argues that this revisionist "history" was a landmark achievement because it retold Israel/Judah's traditions from Pentateuchal narratives to the history of the monarchies. Although Chronicles did not displace these older traditions, it did help to transfer the key social institution from the monarchy to the Temple.[150] This revision better reflected the period in which the hope of a Davidic monarch had faded and the rise of a powerful priesthood had emerged.

Of course, the revision of the history of Israel was done by a very interested party. By (re)writing the history of Israel, this elite group was "able to control and possess the past."[151] Snyman argues that the construction of texts such as Chronicles determines what he calls "the public transcript," a socially constructed ideology that operates at two levels within two groups of a society:

---

[147] Ben Zvi, "The Urban Center of Jerusalem," 196.

[148] Ben Zvi, "The Urban Center of Jerusalem," 200; David M. Lewis, "The Persepolis Tablets: Speech, Seal and Script," in *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World* (ed. Alan K. Bowman and Greg Woolf; Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1994), 17-32; Berquist, *Judaism in Persia's Shadow*, 154.

[149] Estimated at approximately one percent of the total population; Ben Zvi, "The Urban Center of Jerusalem," 196.

[150] Berquist, *Judaism in Persia's Shadow*, 155. Cf. also Jonathan E. Dyck, *The Theocratic Ideology of the Chronicler* (eds. R. Alan Culpepper and Rolf Rendtorff; Biblical Interpretation Series 33; Boston: Brill, 1998), 162-164; 219-228, who argues that the Chr's revisionist history shifted focus from a monarchical worldview to a theocratic worldview. Whereas the monarchy had failed Israel/Judah time and again, YHWH had never failed. Of course, the priesthood (and occasionally prophets) was the only institution with the ability to properly broker divine knowledge; in a theocratic state, the high priest became the *de facto* representative of YHWH on earth, otherwise known as a "king."

[151] Snyman, "Tis a Vice To Know Him," 98. On these issues, see also Eisenstadt, *The Political Systems of Empires*, 64-65, who argues that, the formalization of religious traditions is a typical function of

> (It) refers to the interaction between subordinates and those who dominate them. This transcript constitutes the self-portrait of the dominant elite as they would like to see it themselves...In this transcript they make out an ideological case explaining why they are the rulers. Accordingly, one should expect the public transcript to be...bent on affirming and naturalizing the power of the ruling elite, while at the same time concealing their weak points. In order to be effective, the transcript should have rhetorical force, which is achieved by creating some sort of resonance within the subordinates...the public transcript tells the people why they are ruled by a particular group and why the governing system has taken on a particular form...For the dominant elite, their transcript serves to buck up their courage, improve their cohesion, display their power, and convince themselves of their high moral purpose. It could well be that the leading actors are influenced by their own script to a greater extent than the minor players of the subordinate classes.[152]

The concept of a "public transcript" is similar in scope to Ben Zvi's arguments about inclusion and exclusion from the rhetoric of "Israel."[153] He concludes that the "exilic Israel" in various biblical texts cannot be explained in terms of a struggle over land between immigrants and "natives" nor as a means to shut the "natives" out of the Jerusalemite Temple's community. Rather, the El=I (i.e., exilic Israel=Israel) claim is better explained in terms of the social discourse of Jerusalem-centered Yahwism, which

---

religious elites within most empires. He cites four manifestations of such activity that have parallels in the present discussion:

1) the codification of sacred books;
2) the development of schools devoted to interpreting the texts;
3) the growth of special educational organizations to spread religious knowledge; and
4) the elaboration of total world-views and ideologies.

[152] Snyman, "Tis a Vice To Know Him," 98. Of course, the rewriting, rereading and reinterpretation of Judahite traditions continued well after the Chronicler's time. See, e.g., the reinterpretation of התורה in 4QMMT^{a-f} which involves reinterpretations (perhaps by the enigmatic Teacher of Righteousness or one of his followers) of various sundry laws to describe who could be part of the "true" community and who could not. Cf. also the explicit references to the polemics of the Teacher in which he enjoyed the status of a prophet (1QpHab 2:3; 7:4-5) whose interpretation was the only valid understanding of the demands of the Law (1QpHab 8:1-3; 1QpMic frag. 8-10, 6-7).

[153] Ehud Ben Zvi, "Inclusion in and Exclusion from Israel as Conveyed by the Use of the Term "Israel" in Post-monarchic Biblical Texts," in *The Pitcher is Broken: Memorial Essays for Gösta W. Ahlström* (ed. Steven W. Holloway and Lowell K. Handy; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 95-149.

claimed that "Israel" was centered on divine principles which were interpreted by the literati, that there was a vital link from Jerusalem-centered Israel to monarchic Israel which in turn was linked to Mosaic Israel. The Second Temple period consisted of a community which was paying for the sins of the fathers and was in the process of starting afresh, almost in terms of a new "exodus."

The "People of the Land" as Source and Audience

To this point, evidence has suggested that the primary audience of (texts such as) Chronicles was indeed an elite Jerusalemite group supported by the Temple. However, another audience that is no less important appears to have been important to the Chr. Through his study of the genealogies of Chronicles, Levin has concluded that this audience was made up of "the people of the land" who, as agrarian peasants living in the hill country of Judah and Benjamin and Ephraim and Manasseh, still lived a largely tribal (as opposed to urban) life.[154] He argues that a number of issues point to this conclusion. The most important is the question of why the Chr utilized genealogies to express socio-political relationships that could have been expressed otherwise; "...the biblical authors could have chosen other forms, but they did not."[155] He argues that the intended readers of the text would have had to have been familiar with the genealogical form for it to be rhetorically effective.[156] Although he argues that the author of Chronicles would have been part of the Jerusalemite priestly elite, Levin points out that the rhetoric of the book of Chronicles is more inclusive of the "people of the land" than similar post-exilic books like Ezra-Nehemiah, perhaps because of the fact that Chronicles was written later, when the literati's memories of any immigrant-native conflicts were dimmer.[157]

---

[154] Yigal Levin, "Who Was the Chronicler's Audience? A Hint from His Genealogies," *JBL* 122 (2003): 229-245. While Levin does not explicitly distinguish what is meant by "tribal" vs. "urban" lifestyles, it would seem that the largest distinction would be that members of the working class were producers of goods and consumers of ideology while the elite tended to be consumers of goods and producers of ideology.

[155] Levin, "Who Was the Chronicler's Audience?," 234.

[156] There appear to be three problems with the argument as Levin states it, though these do not affect my overall arguments in this paper. The first is the assumption that the "intended audience" is singular, when clearly the text was used by the community of "Israel" which seems to encompass more than one "audience." Second, Levin assumes that the "intended audience" = the "intended readers." This is not necessarily the case as it is most unlikely that the agrarian peasant class would have been able to read for themselves, though this does not negate, in any way, that they probably were *one of* the intended audiences of Chronicles. Third, there is no good reason that the intended audience would *necessarily* have had to have been familiar with genealogical forms "in their daily lives." Levin claims to have a reasonable understanding of genealogies that are some two and a half millennia removed from his own time; he is certainly not familiar with genealogical forms in any sort of "daily" sense. Similarly, an elite class could have understood these forms without experiencing their effects on a daily basis. They could have understood them enough to use them to construct a "public transcript" for their own interests, to construct a past that was believable enough for the peasant class to believe, yet did not *primarily* serve the peasant class' best interests.

What does not emerge clearly is what would have motivated a member of the Jerusalemite literati to spend significant energy on including the peasant workers into the circle of reading. I would propose two reasons that seem to reflect the socio-economic situation of the Persian II period. The first is that taxes needed to be collected from the farmers who made up the bulk of the population in Yehud. While it is certainly possible to force people to pay taxes to the Temple, it is much easier to persuade them that they are part of a community that receives (material) divine blessings if it functions properly (cf. 2 Chr 31:10). It is better to convince people, if possible, to "rejoice" when they pay taxes (cf. 2 Chr 24:9-11) than it is to coerce them by militaristic means; the old adage "the pen is mightier than the sword" rings particularly true here. The opposite – the threat of divine curse – is an equally effective rhetorical strategy to convince the public to act in certain ways (cf. 2 Chr 34:24).[158]

The second reason that Chronicles might have been written to include the agrarian class as part of its audience could have had to do with the broader context of Yehud and its increasing autonomy during the slippage of Achaemenid control prior to the conquest of Alexander. As Berquist has pointed out, precious little is actually known about Yehud in this period, whether from Persian, Greek or Hebrew Bible sources.[159] However, he argues that certain trajectories were likely. As the Egyptians began to revolt in the early fifth century BCE, Yehud would have likely experienced pressure from Empires to the south, east and west, although little is known about the precise paths of these armies. Taxation on Persia's satrapies would also likely have increased (at least in principle) to pay for various revolts that began to increase over time as the Empire began to lose its grip. What is not known is if the Persians would have been able to enforce growing taxation policies as imperial power ebbed. It is also likely that Yehud experienced a growing sense of autonomy in this time prior to the Greeks. Without the presence of a strong imperial government in Yehud, the growing power of the priesthood would likely have taken advantage of the taxes that were still collected even though fewer and fewer of these may have actually been delivered to the Empire. All these factors may have contributed to a growing sense of nationalism among the Jerusalemite literati that may be read "between the lines" in Chronicles. The inclusion of "all Israel" might have been part of how the elite began to promote a renewed sense of nationalism politically focused on the Jerusalemite priesthood (as supported, of course, by YHWH) as the new *de facto* monarchy.[160] In other words, as more people were included in "all Israel" under the leadership of the Jerusalemite elite, more land/taxes became available to the Temple and those it served.

---

[157] Levin, "Who Was the Chronicler's Audience?," 244.

[158] See, for example, my list/discussion of the Chr's funerary descriptions of Judah's kings below; those who die badly are described by the Chr as having sinned and thus killed by YHWH. It seems that the Chr used expressed the threat of divine curse most clearly in these characters that *should* have been exemplars of pious behavior. If the Chr's narratives were read in Yehud, the Chr's ideology of blessing/curse based on human action seems clear to both the elite and the public.

[159] Berquist, *Judaism in Persia's Shadow*, 126.

Briant paints a different picture of the so-called decline of Persian power.[161] He argues that the very strength of the Achaemenid imperial system, the support of localized traditions that allowed for the great *Pax Persica* and its success in creating local economic viability, was in fact, also its greatest weakness. According to Briant, the Persian Empire fell primarily *not* because of slipping imperial power, but because each of the subjugated people groups had been offered autonomy to such a degree that local ideological loyalty to the Empire was compromised. He offers proof in the stories of Alexander who, upon conquering various peoples, seemed to have little trouble convincing local elites to accept his version of imperialism (which, to the locals was just as good/bad as any other). Although Briant does not speak here about Chronicles, if his theory of the decline of the Achaemenid Empire is correct, the sense of nationalism in Chronicles similar to Berquist's above, is just as easily explained.

Therefore, Levin seems to be partially right; Chronicles was written, in part, to/for the agrarian classes to include them in the Jerusalemite Temple's religion. However, all access to the Temple was brokered textually by the literati who controlled *primary* access to the Temple and the texts that legitimated its existence. Though they were certainly not excluded from the community, the vast majority of the population was accepted only on the terms of the "public transcript" as prepared by the literati.

Summary

Thus far I have attempted to bring to bear two (apparently) disparate issues to the book of Chronicles. Modern biblical rhetorical criticism comprises two major perspectives. However, to date, there appears to have been little thought given to what these rhetorical tools actually help one understand about the ancient readers/hearers of the biblical texts. There are those who would study the "art of composition" which may, among other things, focus on a "close (re)reading" of texts and which allow consideration of complex literary features. I argue that this type of biblical criticism does not help us understand how the vast majority of ancient Israelites would have heard biblical texts since the hearer would have been unabler to analyze complex texts in detail. However, this research *is* beneficial in helping us understand the highly influential minority of the writers of biblical texts. I then argue that other rhetorical scholars focus on the "art of persuasion" of the texts, based on an Aristotelian style of rhetorical criticism that takes seriously an historical rhetor, audience and various considerations of what is possible to understand when texts are *heard* by an illiterate audience. I also attempt to bring to bear the power differentials that such a "rhetorical situation" engenders when the elite read to the general public. What appears to be lacking in this perspective is that the *primary* audience (the literati who wrote, (re)read and promulgated the texts at their leisure) is not taken seriously.

---

[160] In a way similar to the Hasmonean sense of nationalism that occurred later.
[161] Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, 866-871.

I also argue that some historical understanding of these two groups in an historical period will help scholars understand some of the motivations and concerns of each group and what they would likely have desired to achieve vis-à-vis their interaction with the Jerusalemite cult during the Persian period. The composition of texts such as Chronicles' revisionist "history" appears to have been part of what Snyman has called the "public transcript." I maintain that this is a useful heuristic device that can allow scholars to see multiple levels in the use of texts. The primary group of elite, literate people (in this case the Temple literati) composed, (re)read and promulgated the texts, in public settings, to legitimate their rule over the vast majority of the population while being continually affirmed in their position by these same texts. In sum, it appears that the two types of biblical rhetorical criticism may provide key(s) to understanding the multiple uses these texts seem to have had during Persian period Yehud. When the methods are properly combined, they can illuminate multiple levels of meaning in texts such as Chronicles that may have been used/heard in antiquity.

Chapter Two: Compositional-Rhetorical Exegesis Read from the Perspective of the Yehud Literati

Methodological Assumptions: The Art of Composition

What does a "close reading" of (the composition of) historiographical prose mean? What elements of a given narrative should be highlighted if one is attempting to understand the compositional process of "historicized prose fiction" such as that of Chronicles?[162] How do the rhetorical methodologies in the "art of composition" and the "art of persuasion" differ? What does the fruit of such analysis reveal about the worldview(s)/motivation(s) of the author(s) of the text? How can the concept of the "public transcript" aid one's exegetical efforts?

Perhaps the first issue at hand is to admit that, while biblical prose was affected by the cultures that surrounded ancient Israel, there exist no ANE theoretical discussions of literary composition; such discussions first appeared among ancient Greek philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle.[163] Longman draws a distinction between emic and etic literary analyses. The emic approach describes "native designations and classifications of literature." The advantage of this approach is that scholars may investigate literature within the consciousness of the "native" writers of texts. The etic literary approach is conscious that it comes from without and necessarily treats the texts under investigation as somewhat generic (or at least possible to investigate from a transcultural/transhistorical scholarly position). The obvious disadvantage of the etic approach is that a non-native methodology is imposed on the text which may or may not coincide with the emic.[164]

---

[162] The term "historicized prose fiction" is borrowed from Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 24-25. Alter uses the term to distinguish the type of prose that arose from ancient Israel from the literature that was composed by Israel's neighbors. Alter argues that the ANE epic was consciously avoided because of its associations with cyclical magical ritual; whereas Israel's neighbors sought a cyclic understanding of religio-"historical" events, Israel sought a god who was above history and who was an agent of human (i.e., linear) "historical" events. Cf. the similar comments of Patrick and Scult above.

[163] Tremper Longman III, "Israelite Genres in their Ancient Near Eastern Context," in *The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty-First Century* (ed. Marvin A. Sweeney and Ehud Ben Zvi; Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 2003), 177-195 [179]. Longman is careful to admit that such theoretical discussions do not exist "to my knowledge." It is important to state that while there are no extant documents, there may have been at some time (e.g., within scribal schools) and scholars need not suggest an overly simplistic theoretical literary situation in the ANE; cf. Albert Kirk Grayson, *Babylonian Historical-Literary Texts* (Toronto Semitic Texts and Studies 3; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), 5.

[164] Longman III, "Israelite Genres," 181.

The next issue that should be taken seriously is the fact that the authors/editors of Chronicles were literate. Given that the rate of literacy in the ANE was very low, the only people who could read for themselves would have been the ruling classes who could afford to be educated or the scribes who were paid by the upper classes to read for them.[165] Even among these groups there would have been an unequal access to the texts; not even all of the aristocratic classes would have been literate. This has a number of implications for how the text would have been composed. First, in contradistinction to the generally illiterate public to whom the text may have been read, composers of the text would have had some kind of *Vorlage* of Samuel-Kings at their disposal. They were in a unique position to copy, change, add and edit the traditions of the "history" of "Israel."[166] When the traditions were changed, added to or subtracted from in some way, a window (however small or opaque) into the worldview of the Chr becomes accessible; yet one must be careful in the use of Sam-Kings as comparative material as Chronicles presents itself as an historical work in its own right. Nowhere does it demand that its readers compare its accuracy or theology with Sam-Kings or any other traditions. In addition, the Chr, developing his text in the late Persian period, would also likely have had access to other Israelite historiographical traditions (including, e.g., material from the Tetrateuch, and DtrH in some form, some prophetic material and probably some Psalms). This fact should encourage modern scholars to be sensitive to intertextual echoes (conscious or unconscious) in Chronicles as part of the intellectual milieu of the Chr's contemporaries.[167] It is important to note that a strong emphasis on intertextuality will compose a key (if at times subtle) difference between my exegeses of chapters 2 and 3. Given the fact that Chronicles is presented as narrative rather than poetry, my "art of composition" narrative will not be as diagrammatically inclined as those Muilenburg scholars I have noted above who tended to work more on biblical poetry than narrative (though this is not *necessarily* the case with each one). Moreover, the literati would be able to have *heard* (and understood) an aural message being performed and thus chapter three's exegesis would have been able to be perceived by the literati as well. *The critical distinction* is that the subtleties of the exegesis in chapter two would have been less likely to have been discerned by an ancient, illiterate, public audience who lacked access to texts.

---

[165] On the issue of literacy in the ANE in general, see, e.g., Karen Rhea Nemet-Nejat, *Daily Life in Ancient Mesopotamia* (Daily Life Through History; Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998), 54-76; Vanstiphout, H. L. J., "Memory and Literacy in Ancient Western Asia," *CANE*, 4: 2181-2196. On the issues of literacy in Persian Yehud, see, e.g., Christine Schams, *Jewish Scribes in the Second-Temple Period* (Sheffield, Eng.: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 309-327 and Philip R. Davies, *Scribes and Schools: The Canonization of the Hebrew Scriptures* (ed. Douglas A. Knight; 1st ed.; Library of Ancient Israel; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 74-88.

[166] The issues surrounding the sources of the Chr's historiography are numerous. They have been treated elsewhere and need not be repeated here. The majority of scholars believe that the Chr used Sam-Kings as his main source and may or may not have used other sources for the material found in Chr but not in Sam-Kings. For a general introduction to the various issues surrounding the Chr as historian, see Matt Patrick Graham et al., eds., *The Chronicler as Historian* (JSOTSup 238; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997); especially Kenneth G. Hoglund, "The Chronicler as Historian: A Comparativist Perspective," in *The Chronicler as Historian* (ed. Matt Patrick Graham et al.; *JSOTSup 238*; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 19-29 and Isaac Kalimi, "Was the Chronicler a historian?," in *The Chronicler as Historian* (ed. Matt Patrick Graham et al.; *JSOTSup 238*; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 73-89. For a rather unique perspective, which suggests that the Chr did not use Sam-Kings as its main source but that the Dtr and the Chr used the same source (which is non-extant) differently, see A. Graeme Auld, *Kings without Privilege: David and Moses in the Story of the Bible's Kings* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994) and A. Graeme Auld, "What was the Main Source of the Books of Chronicles?," in *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture* (ed. Matt Patrick Graham and Steven L. McKenzie; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 91–99.

Narratological sensitivity should also be brought to bear in an investigation of the composition of Chronicles.[168] The composition of ancient Israelite narratives is usually described as highly artistic; the authors of Israelite prose wrote with a literary novelty unique in the ANE. Most contemporary ANE religio-mythical literature was written in (what modern literary scholars would call) poetic form. Thus one might take a somewhat modified approach to analyze Hebrew Bible prose.[169]

To understand how/why a given pericope was composed, attention may be given to a number of features. Initially, some thought should be given to why a certain genre was chosen by the author and for what purpose.[170] One should also be sensitive to plot, characters, setting, point of view and conclusion (including both the peak of tension and the denouement). The tools for such an investigation should include some analysis of repetition, intertextuality, narration, dialogue, chronology (or achronology), ambiguity and various figures of speech (including idiomatic expressions, metonymy, puns and merism).[171] Finally, one should cite the various structures of the narrative; whereas persuasive (i.e., public) rhetoric may be analyzed line by line as it would have been orated (audiences are less able to perceive overall literary structures in orated performances), compositional rhetoric should be analyzed within its various micro and macro structures.

---

[167] On these issues of intertextuality, see Ben Zvi, "The Urban Center of Jerusalem" and Garbini, "Hebrew Literature".

[168] Perhaps the two most important monographs dealing with ancient Israelite narratology are Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible* and Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. See also Herbert C. Brichto, *Toward a Grammar of Biblical Poetics: Tales of the Prophets* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 1-63.

[169] It should be mentioned that a patent distinction between ancient Israelite "poetry" and "prose" is tenuous and has been particularly attacked by James L. Kugel, *The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and its History* (paperback ed.; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), see esp. 59-95. Even those sympathetic to Kugel's position that "there is no absolute dividing line between poetry and prose in the Bible" usually maintain (at least) some significant nuances between the two; cf. e.g., Francis Landy, "Poetics and Parallelism: Some Comments on James Kugel's *The Idea of Biblical Poetry*," *JSOT* 28 (1984): 61-87. Others, e.g., Rebecca Raphael, "That's No Literature, That's my Bible: On James Kugel's Objections to the Idea of Biblical Poetry," *JSOT* 27 (2002): 37-45, have attacked the overall validity of Kugel's arguments more directly.

[170] Form-critical studies have come a long way since the pioneering work of Hermann Gunkel. For an introduction to the latest research in the field from a variety of perspectives, see Sweeney and Ben Zvi, eds., *The Changing Face of Form Criticism* , esp. the preliminary comments of Sweeney and Ben Zvi, "Introduction," 1-11. One of the more important conclusions in recent form-critical studies is the degree to which most scholars see fluidity rather than rigidity in ancient Israelite "genres." Moreover, the degree to which scholars are increasingly aware that their work is etic rather than emic correlates to a growing awareness of the scholarly limitations of one's method; e.g., Longman III, "Israelite Genres," 194.

The Last of the Seed of David is Rescued – 2 Chr 22:10-12

The narrative opens during one of the darker moments of Judah's history. Jehu, antagonist of the kingdom of Israel, had just killed Ahaziah, presumably due to his connection to the northern kingdom via his mother Athaliah. Athaliah was quick to rise up and destroy ותקם ותדבר את כל זרע הממלכה לבית יהודה "all the royal seed of the house of Judah." Although the Chr appears to be using a version of Sam-Kgs, there are certain changes. The Chr chooses a curious word for דבר-1 "to destroy." *HALOT* distinguishes this root, from the usual meaning (דבר-2 "to speak") and provides glosses of "drive away (with negative speech)" or "destroy," citing examples such as Ps 18:48; 75:6; 127:5; Job 19:18. It is possible that the Chr wished to convey the meaning of "coup" whereby Athaliah incited a group of political insiders to aid her in her bid for the throne all the more ironically because Athaliah herself would be overthrown, at least in part, by the rhetorical appeals of Jehoiada to the people. There is also the possibility of a double entendre of the root דבר in its nominal form as "plague" or "pestilence." If this were the case, Athaliah's rule was being described in a most negative way "she plagued;" her impending usurpation of the Davidic throne was predicated by political "disease" derived from the evil northern kingdom.[172]

Many scholars have also noted the conspicuous absence of a regnal formula when the reign of Athaliah is introduced. A comparison of the regnal formulas of the monarchs who immediately precede and follow Athaliah demonstrates unmistakable similarities:[173]

---

[171] Tremper Longman III, "Literary Approaches and Interpretation," in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis* (ed. Willem VanGemeren; vol. 1 of 5 Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), elec. ed.

[172] Cf. the use of דבר 2 Chr 20:9.

> 2 Chr 22:2 Ahaziah was twenty-two years old
> when he became king
> and he reigned one year in Jerusalem
> and his mother's name was Athaliah
> the granddaughter of Omri.
>
> 2 Chr 24:1 Joash was seven years old
> when he became king,
> and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem
> and his mother's name was Zibiah
> from Beersheba.

2 Chr 22:2 בן ארבעים ושתים שנה אחזיהו
במלכו
ושנה אחת מלך בירושלם
ושם אמו עתליהו
בת עמרי

2 Chr 24:1 בן שבע שנים יאש
במלכו
וארבעים שנה מלך בירושלם
ושם אמו צביה
מבאר שבע

It seems reasonable to assume that the Chr wished his audience to consider Athaliah's reign illegitimate; not only was she a usurper, but she was a female and of the house of Omri. Her reign was accursed threefold. Moreover, her burial is not described which increases the shame of her reign; only her violent death at the Horse gate is described (2 Chr 23:15); Ahaziah's and Joash's burials, while both shameful, are mentioned in 2 Chr 22:9 and 24:25 respectively. The Chr has thus skillfully woven a pattern of illegitimacy throughout the queen's reign; his primary readership was to make no mistake as to Athaliah's interruption of the Davidic monarchy.

---

[173] E.g., Sara Japhet, *I and II Chronicles: A Commentary* (1st American ed.; OTL; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 828; Raymond B. Dillard, *2 Chronicles* (eds. David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker; WBC 15; Waco: Word Books, 1987), 179; H. G. M. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles* (ed. R. E. Clements; NCB; Grand Rapids and London: Eerdmans and Marshall Morgan & Scott Publishing, 1982), 314.

The Chr's phrase את כל זרע הממלכה לבית יהודה "all the seed of the kingdom of the house of Judah" is rather enigmatic; having just recorded Jehu's northern coup and the death of Ahaziah and his brothers, just who is left to be extinguished by Athaliah (other than Joash who is about to be introduced) is something of a mystery.[174] It is possible that this is another rhetorical (i.e., not historical) attempt to "prove" Athaliah's illegitimate usurpation of the throne; i.e., by definition, what "usurpers" *do* is kill off all other royal contenders. This may be viewed as somewhat analogous to how pious kings act; whether there was any possibility of *de facto* non-Yahwistic worship being introduced prior to the pious king's reign is irrelevant; pious kings, by definition (amongst other things), tear down Asherim/high places and destroy illegitimate cults. For example, at the beginning of the Asa narrative, the monarch is described as follows:

> 2 Chr 14:2 Asa did good and right in the sight of YHWH his God,
> 2 Chr 14:3 for he removed the foreign altars and high places, tore down the sacred pillars, cut down the Asherim,
> 2 Chr 14:4 and commanded Judah to seek YHWH God of their fathers and to observe the law and the commandment.
> 2 Chr 14:5 He also removed the high places and the incense altars from all the cities of Judah. And the kingdom was undisturbed under him.

What is unclear is from where all of this non-Yahwistic paraphernalia/apostasy came. According to the text, the neophyte kingdom of Judah remained Yahwistic (if sometimes complacent; cf. 2 Chr 12:1) during the reigns of Rehoboam and Abijah (2 Chr 11.14; 13:8-12) and remained so even as the northern kingdom under Jeroboam grew in its apostasy (2 Chr 11:15; 13:8-9). At the end of Asa's reign, he is described as having neglected to remove the high places (2 Chr 15:17) in what appears to be a tempering of his otherwise pious life and a prelude to the monarch's alliance with the king of Aram and the resulting foot disease that caused his death. Similarly, the beginning of Jehoshaphat's reign begins with a description of his avoidance of the Baal-cult (2 Chr 17:3) and the tearing down of the high places and Asherah poles (2 Chr 17:6; 19:3). However, when the Chr wishes to temper the piety of the monarch, he states that the high places were *not* removed during the reign of the Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 20:33). The actions of monarchs thus appear to be more related to descriptions of character than to historical realia.[175] Thus, in the above case, Athaliah is depicted as a usurper by the actions that are usually attributed to usurpers. Finally, the term כל "all" is introduced in v. 10. The Chr uses some form of כל 13x in chapter 23 and seems to indicate at least two issues. First, that when an important action is described, it is described as being done in explicit unity. Second, the actions so described seem to be narrated in such a way that the careful reader should be alerted to the fact that these issues might not have been recorded as historically accurate. The religious significance behind the actions is to be considered important.

---

[174] William Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles* (2vols.; JSOTSup 253–254; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 120-121. Of course, it is also possible that the Chr was merely following his Dtr source at this juncture.

The poison that Athaliah attempts to inject into the Davidic line is neutralized by a different sort of woman – the pious wife of the priest, Jehoiada.[176] The account in Kings does not associate Jehoshabeath with Jehoiada; the Chr records this information with the likely intent of foreshadowing the role of the priest and protector of the royal infant in the impending coup d'etat.[177] The survival of both Jehoshabeath and Joash during the attempted extermination of all the seed of the kingdom of the house of Judah introduces a pattern of failure into the reign of Athaliah and of success for those associated with the Temple, where young Joash was hidden.[178] The Temple of YHWH is described here both as a sanctuary of the innocent and a place of refuge from the wicked.[179]

At this early point, it should be noted that all the elements of an exciting story are being carefully crafted.[180] The evil queen mother, the step-daughter of the queen, the last remaining child of the royal lineage and the royal (religious) vizier-protector are presented with very few words. Moreover, the danger and intrigue of the palace is contrasted with the safety and security of the Temple; a battle between good and evil is (again) about to take place under the most dire of circumstances. The Chr's (his)story is nothing if not stirring. In addition, the Chr appears to be consciously weaving echoes of even more ancient history within his story. Johnstone also points out that several literary motifs are strikingly similar to the rescue of the infant Moses (Ex 1-2).[181] In both cases there is an attempt to exterminate male children; in both cases a heroic royal princess, who, as the daughter (or step-daughter) of the villain, foils the murderous plan; in both stories the child is hidden and a wet-nurse is provided. It is quite possible that the primary readership of the story would have picked up on these implicit connections to Moses and that they would have taken such connections to reinforce various parallels between Moses and the Davidic line in addition to the explicit connections in 2 Chr 23:18; 24:6, 9.

---

[175] I maintain that this is in no way a negative evaluative judgment of the Chr or his text; what it does do is to allow the (modern and/or ancient) reader to accept elements of historical narrative that appear to have had little to do with history proper.

[176] Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 121.

[177] Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 315.

[178] Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 179.

[179] It seems that the Chr designs the salvation of the young prince within the confines of the Temple to "prove" the sanctity of the Davidic line while pointing out the sacrilege of the Omrides. On the issues of sacrality and spatiality, see Sara Japhet, "Some Biblical Concepts of Sacred Place," in *Sacred Space* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 55-72 and Sara Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and its Place in Biblical Thought* (2nd rev. ed.; BEATAJ 9; New York: P. Lang, 1997), 63-81. According to Japhet, the Temple was a place where YHWH lived and revealed himself; thus, if Joash lived there for six years, he had symbolic access to the patron deity of Judah (indeed, he was hidden inside the deity's house) while Athaliah was excluded from the presence of YHWH. Even when Athaliah exerts her negative influence over the Temple (2 Chr 24:7) it is her sons that do the dirty work. The Chr's depiction of Athaliah is utterly devoid of connection to YHWH except the final moments of her life when she enters the Temple only to see the coronation party of Joash (2 Chr 23:12).

[180] Peter R. Ackroyd, *I & II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah* (TBC; London: S. C. M. Press, 1973), 157.

In v. 12, the plot to foil Athaliah's rule is described as having been successful; the child-king was hidden for six years, without threat. The number six appears to be rhetorically significant; it may point to the divine limitation of both the reign of the queen and the hiding of Joash, the last of the Davidic dynasty. The Chr and his primary readership may have been aware of, among other references, the function of שש "six" as a symbol of limitation in Exod 16:26; 20:9; 21:2; 23:10; Lev 23:3; 25:3; Deut 5:13; 15:12; Josh 6:3 especially when used preceding some form of שבע "seven."

The Priest Assembles His Army – 2 Chr 23:1-3

The salvation of the house of David begins, appropriately enough, in the seventh year of the reign of Athaliah. Surely the connotations of the number seven would not have been lost on the first readers of the text. Several Mesopotamian legends (e.g., Epic of Gilgamesh) use the number seven as a symbol of perfection and/or completeness.[182] Perhaps this is most clear in the biblical origin traditions (the root שבע

---

[181] Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 122; Donald B. Redford, "The Literary Motif of the Exposed Child," *Numen* 14 (1967): 209-228, points out that this type of story was relatively common in the ANE, especially in (hi)stories of royalty.

[182] The number seven occurs regularly in Mesopotamian literature, in lists associated with a deity, seven-day festivals and sevenfold ritual actions. In the Epic of Gilgamesh the number seven is an organizing principle, particularly for time periods. Enkidu goes with the harlot six days and seven nights, the storm subsides on the seventh day, and Gilgamesh loses immortality by sleeping for seven days. See "Epic of Gilgamesh," translated by E. A. Speiser (*ANET*, 72-99) [see pp. 77, 94, 95 respectively]. See also P. P. Jenson, "שבע," *NIDOTTE*, elec. ed.

"seven" is found 24x in Gen 1-11)[183] that rely heavily on ANE (Babylonian) mythology. The P traditions in the Pentateuch also seem to have utilized the number seven for various symbolic purposes.[184]

Phase one of the revolution begins in the symbolic seventh year, when Jehoiada the priest "strengthened himself."[185] In Chronicles, the root חזק "establish/strengthen" is most often used in the context of military leadership (e.g., 1 Chr 19:12-13; 26:27; 2 Chr 8:3; 11:11-12; 13:7-8) and/or in contexts of the establishment of a new king (e.g. 1 Chr 11:10; 28:7; 2 Chr 1:1; 11:17; 12:13; 13:21; 17:1; 21:4).[186] Clearly, the Chr wanted his readers to know from the beginning of the story that Jehoiada was not an ordinary priest of YHWH but a man who (perhaps like Moses who was something of a priest-king) also possessed significant political and military abilities.[187] Jehoiada is able to לקח "take" את שרי המאות "captains of hundreds" and make a ברית "covenant" with them (and do so without question).[188] Jehoiada prompts three covenants in rapid succession in chapter 23 (vv. 1, 3, 16) that brought the entire nation, including the political and military leaders that would have been needed to stabilize the impending coup, into a new relationship with the child-king and Jehoiada his vizier. No doubt this narrative would have "proven" to the Yehud literati that, although the Davidic dynasty was head of all

---

[183] Gen 2:2-3; 4:15, 24; 5:7, 12, 25-26, 31; 7:2-4, 10-11; 8:4, 10, 12, 14; 11:21.

[184] The seven branches of the lampstand (Ex 25:31-37) probably portray the tree of life. Priests are consecrated during a seven-day ritual (Ex 29:35-37) which has a theophanic climax on the seventh day (Lev 8-9). There are seven festivals (in Lev 23 and Num 28-29), the two most important of which last seven days (Unleavened Bread and Tabernacles, which also take place in the seventh month). Purification from major impurities takes seven days (Lev 12:2; 15:13; Num 19:11; c.f. 2 Kgs 5:10), as do rituals that effect a transition from one status to another (Lev 14:1-20). These frequently involve sevenfold sprinkling with blood (Lev 4:6; Num 19:4) or oil (Lev 8:11). The number of sacrifices offered is often seven (Num 28-29) and the climactic seventh day of Tabernacles sees the sacrifice of seven bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs (Num 29:32).

[185] Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 130, speculates that the impending coup took place on New Year's day of the seventh year, a day in which many people would have gathered together to celebrate and perhaps witness the reigning monarch's annual vows. However, the text appears to be vague as to the exact date of the events described, noting only that it occurred בשנה השבעית "in the seventh year."

[186] Of course, these two functions of חזק sometimes overlap whenever military force is used to establish a new king. The root, in the hitpael stem, seems to be something of a political/military leitwort. It occurs 27 times in the Hebrew Bible but 15 times in Chronicles (more than in all the other books combined). On the military connotations of חזק, see John Wesley Wright, "Guarding the Gates: 1 Chronicles 26:1-19 and the Roles of Gatekeepers in Chronicles," *JSOT* 48 (1990): 69-81, esp. p. 73-74. Wright notes that the hitpael form of חזק is used 27 times in the Hebrew Bible, including 15 times in Chronicles, none of which are borrowed from the Dtr.

[187] In 2 Chr 16:9 Hanani the seer credits YHWH as the one who ultimately "strengthens" those who have surrendered their hearts to him. Thus, although Jehoiada is described as strengthening himself the primary readership would likely have associated such a "strengthening" to be, at least in part, due to YHWH..

[188] It is unclear whether the five names were taken to alert the reader that the five leaders were Levites. All the names except for Elishaphat may be found in other lists of priests and Levites. On these issues see Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 315 and Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 180-181.

Israel, it was eternally indebted to the Yahwistic priesthood (Levitical and otherwise) for its salvation at this dark hour.[189]

Once the initial momentum had been secured by Jehoiada, the military leaders are sent throughout Judah to יקבצו "secure" the support of two important groups: the Levites from מכל ערי יהודה "all the cities of Judah"[190] and the ראשי האבות לישראל "heads of the fathers of Israel."[191] It is altogether possible that the Chr's use of the root קבץ "to gather" is an allusion to the enthronement of David (1 Chr 11:1) before all Israel.[192] With the alliance of the military, Temple staff and tribal leaders of Judah now assembled in Jerusalem,[193] Jehoiada's plan is about to take shape.[194]

ויכרת כל הקהל ברית בבית האלהים עם המלך "And all the assembly made a covenant in the house of God with the king." Here Jehoiada secures the commitment of

---

[189] Contra Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 829, who argues that the coup is meant to be understood as a popular uprising, by the people for the people. She bases this on the fact that the description of the coup in 2 Kings 11 is limited to Jehoiada and the captains of the Carites and the guards. While it is true that the Chr does include a more populist description of the events, it is only because of Jehoiada, the high priest, the initiator and strategist behind this salvific act, that the house of David had survived.

See also Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 180 who argues that historically this event makes sense because if, as according to the story, a northern queen established her rule (which included Baal worship as opposed to YHWH), the Yahwistic priesthood would likely have wished to reestablish their power base by propping up a king who would (or should) have been indebted to them. This argument is only partially convincing because, if true, one would have the more difficult problem of explaining why the Dtr had not mentioned it at all. The Dtr only mentions the Carites (mentioned elsewhere only in 2 Sam 20:23); who may have been part of the royal bodyguard, recruited from the Philistines. According to Herodotus, *The Histories* II.154.1-5, Psammetichos of Egypt (663-609) hired Carians from Cilicia as part of his royal bodyguard. It is quite possible that Judean kings did the same; see Gwilym H. Jones, *1 and 2 Kings: Based on the Revised Standard Version* (ed. Ronald E. Clements; 2 vols.; NCB Commentary; Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1984), 478; John Gray, *I and II Kings: A Commentary* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), 516. If this is true, it is possible to understand at least part of the motivation for the Chr's revisionist history; he could not have accepted the foreign Carites as entering into the house of YHWH (v. 4) even if to protect/save young Joash.

[190] Note the use of the word כל "all" once again indicating the completeness and unity of the leadership under Jehoiada.

[191] The ראשי האבות "heads of the fathers" played a crucial role in many of the Chr's narratives (cf. 1 Chr 11:1; 12:23-40; 28:1; 29:6-9, 21-25; 2 Chr 1:2); Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 181. The fact that they are gathered here would have indicated that what was about to take place would be a major event in the Davidic monarchy.

[192] Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 122.

[193] The account in Kings states only that Jehoiada had sent for the military leaders אליו בית יהוה "to the house of YHWH." The setting of the narrative in Jerusalem rather than in the Temple makes Jehoiada's central command seem more national (and political) and less religious; the primary readers of the text would likely have appreciated the way this story was developing.

[194] The covert nature of the Chr's scene seems rather unlikely; every important leader coming to a summit in Jerusalem would certainly have attracted the attention of the reigning monarch or on of his/her aides. Again, the "reality" of the story appears to be rather secondary to the Chr's primary readership. See also Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 830.

כל "all" the leaders of Judah (i.e., the קהל "assembly")[195] to the young king (and to himself as initiator of the coup). The narrative has thus narrowed from "all the cities of Judah" to Jerusalem and ultimately to the Temple, where Jehoiada's ambitions are about to be revealed; and at the same time as he narrows the setting to Jerusalem, the Chr broadens the resolve of the people – all the members of the assembly agree to the terms (whatever they are) of the covenant.

Jehoiada presents the child to the assembly and says "Behold, the king's son." Many of the leaders of Judah might have thought that Athaliah's plan had been successful, that she had exterminated all the seed of the line of David. In the world of the narrative, this "unveiling" of the king('s son) would have been rather dramatic; YHWH's promise to the Davidic throne still had a chance to be realized. Jehoiada then invoked the promise כאשר דבר יהוה על בני דויד "which YHWH spoke concerning the sons of David" (1 Chr 17:4). The Davidic prerogative is similarly invoked two other times in Chronicles.[196] The first in 2 Chr 6:10 during the accession of Solomon and the second in 2 Chr 13:5 in Abijah's speech, which is similar to this story also in context, with a threat from the house of Ahab. The original readership may well have connected the two. In Abijah's case, the northern kingdom was defeated not because of military strength (2 Chr 13:3) but בני יהודה כי נשענו על יהוה "because the sons of Judah trusted in YHWH." Jehoiada's speech here is rhetorically important; if the leaders would covenant with Joash (and Jehoiada), they could not fail because of the inexorable promise of YHWH, proven through history (at least in Chronicles).

The Priest Unveils His Plan – 2 Chr 23:4-7

Once Jehoiada reveals who will (eventually) reign, he reasserts his own position of power, stating, זה הדבר אשר תעשו "this is the thing which you will do." Most scholars have attempted to reconstruct the historicity of this part of the narrative.[197]

---

[195] According to H. P. Müller, "קהל," *TLOT*, elec. ed., in the Chr history, the nominal form of קהל is the model for the full assembly of the Jewish cultic community convened by the king or the post-exilic leadership for religious purposes at significant moments in the history of the nation's salvation (1 Chron 28:8; 29:1, 10, 20; 2 Chron 29:28, 31ff.; 30:2, 4, 17, 23, 24[2x], 25[2x]). The verbal form occurs in 1 Chron 13:5; 15:3; 2 Chron 5:2; 20:26 in reference to similar matters. The term here, then, would have been yet another signal to the literati that a significant event was about to take place.

[196] Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 830-831.

[197] On which see, e.g., Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 831; Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 316; Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 124-125; Johnstone even suggests that "some kind of sketch-plan of the layout of the Temple and Palace as envisaged by C (sic) must be attempted" and includes a detailed

While this avenue of investigation is intriguing, the narrative itself does not seem to demand historical reliability. Rather, it seems to envision *what* should have happened (according to the social realia of the Chr's own time) and *how* it should have happened. In other words, perhaps one should look to the Chr's understanding of *how* things should have happened as a key to understanding the meaning of Chronicles in light of his own time. Clearly, the "what" is the salvation of the prince – both the Dtr and the Chr agreed on this. The *how* is quite different; whereas the Dtr records an event that might have *actually* happened (perhaps even with some secrecy), the Chr narrates an event that focuses on unity and sacrality. The three שלשית "third(s)" made up of priests and Levites, military and nobles work in concert ultimately forming a cohesive whole to guard the prince when they bring him out for his coronation before כל הָעם "all the people." The positions each division take are symbolic and seem to represent control of Judah's most important social positions. The first division made up of priestly classes was לשערי הספים "to (be) gatekeepers of the thresholds" who appear to be in charge of Temple security. The second division was to secure the palace and the third was to guard the arcane "Gate of the Foundation." This gate may have somehow connected the palace to the Temple (cf. 2 Kgs 11:19; 16:18).

What emerges is the ideological retaking of the province of Judah. The nominal root שער "gate" may act here symbolically as well as literally.[198] Throughout the Hebrew Bible (and the ANE) the gate is regularly used as a symbol of control (of access).[199] From the Chr's description here, one could argue that the Levites and priests are retaking control over the Temple, Judah's central religious institution (via its access point), the military is retaking control of the palace, Judah's central political institution as well as the corridor (the Gate of the Foundation) that connected the nation's two most

---

diagram of the Chr's vision of the setting. Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 182, attempts to harmonize the two accounts. Significantly, all four scholars admit the difficulty of the historicity of the Chr's description in light of his *Vorlage* and historical probabilities.

[198] For a reconstruction of the social function of the gatekeepers in Chronicles, see Wright, "Guarding the Gates," 79.

[199] Richard S. Hess, "שוער; שער," *NIDOTTE*, elec. ed. According to Hess, the gate symbolized two themes. First, as a physical entrance to towns, cities, and temples, the gate represents strategic and social centers. To possess the gate was to possess the city. To gain access to the gate of the sanctuary was to gain access to God. A second theme is that of the gate as a metaphor. In the Hebrew Bible this is used primarily of the passage from life to death; cf. Isa 38:10; Job 38:17; Ps 107:18; 4Q184 1:10; cf. 1QHa 11:17; 14:24; 4Q429 f4ii:4; 4Q432 f5:5. Even the second theme of life→death may have been discerned in Jehoiada's coup. The city of Jerusalem would pass from death (i.e., the rule of an evil Israelite queen and her Baalism) to life (i.e., the rule of a Davidic king who respected YHWH, the giver of life) if Jehoiada's *ad hoc* paramilitary could retake the most important gates within the city; cf. Deut 30:20; Prov 14:27; Jer 21:8.

important institutions.[200] Moreover, “all the people” were to be בחצרות בית יהוה “in the courts of the house of YHWH,” which could be taken to symbolize a public (and absolute) return to Yahwism (as a polemic against real/perceived Baalism).[201]

There is also an element of sacrality that appeared to the Chr as lacking in the Dtr’s account in which the “pagan” bodyguards’ presence would have profaned the Temple. In the Chr’s account, only the priests/Levites are allowed into the Temple; the people are kept בחצרות “in the courts” of the Temple, to resolve the problem of laypersons in the Temple. In v. 6, the commandment to separate the priestly class from the people is made explicit; the priests and Levites may enter the Temple כי קדש המה “because they are holy,” while everyone else (save the king) may not.[202] Finally, all the people are to ישמרו משמרת יהוה “keep the charge of YHWH.” This “charge” of YHWH (with the root שמר “keep/watch” appearing twice consecutively) suggests intentional ambiguity; surely the Chr could have been more specific had he wished.[203] The readers of the text could take it to refer to the fact that David reorganized the Temple duties to include the Levites as keepers of the charge of YHWH (in 1 Chr 23:32 the term משמרת “charge” is used three times) and therefore were in a position קדש “separate” from the public. The charge might also be taken to refer to the fact that the people were to obey Jehoiada in his position as YHWH’s cultic agent. While speculative, the charge could also be taken as commanding the public (under the authority of the priests and Levites) to take civil action alongside the priests and Levites in the salvation of the prince, democratizing the coronation of the king. Perhaps, depending on the circumstances of each public reading of the text, the priestly rhetor/reader would emphasize one or more points.

---

[200] Of course any such interpretation must be acknowledged as wholly hypothetical.

[201] According to Mark F. Rooker, “חצר,” *NIDOTTE*, elec. ed., the root is often used in the Psalter to symbolize the ideal place where the Israelite congregation would worship YHWH; cf. Ps 65:4 [5]; 84:10 [11]; 92:13 [14]; 135:2.

[202] Though it is true that “the people” are prohibited from entering (certain parts of the) Temple, to be sure, they remain part of the sacred order and an integral part of the story, especially in the sense of the rhetorical “unity” of “Israel” as demonstrated by Jehoiada’s command that all the people keep the charge of YHWH; cf. Num 1:53.

[203] Indeed, the narrative is filled with details, even if their meanings are not clear to present interpreters.

In v. 7, Jehoiada further commands the Levites to surround the king (apparently the narrative does not consider the possibility of failure in this coup[204]) inside the Temple, with instructions to kill anyone who might enter the Temple והבא אל הבית יומת "and the one entering the Temple, let him be killed." Japhet points out that this is an important change from 2 Kgs 11:8 which instructs the body guards to kill anyone that approaches the ranks והבא אל השדרות יומת "and whoever comes within the ranks shall be put to death"; she argues that the Dtr envisioned this death penalty for those who would interrupt the coup (i.e., political opponents), whereas the Chr envisioned capital punishment for *any non-clerical person*[205] *who dared set foot in the Temple for any reason.*[206]

The last phrase in v. 7 והיו את המלך בבאו ובצאתו "and be with the king when he comes in and goes out" may be understood as a type of merism that means "be with the king when he does anything" (i.e., for the duration of the coup).[207] When the roots בוא "come (in)" and יצא "go (out)" are used appositely, they tend to carry the sense of everything a person does. While they may be used to describe the public (Deut 28:6, 19; Psa 121:8) they are most often used to describe the offices of religious and/or political/military leaders (Num 27:17, 21; Josh 14:11; 1 Sam 29:6; 2 Sam 3:25; 1 Kgs 3:7; 15:17; 2 Kgs 11:8; 19:27; 2 Chr 1:10; 16:1; Isa 37:28; Jer 17;19; 37:4).

A Successful Coup: The Coronation of Joash – 2 Chr 23:8-11

The Chr goes out of his way to highlight the way in which everyone involved in his story came together in absolute obedience under the leadership of Jehoiada. Twice he uses the adjective כל "all" to demonstrate that "all Judah" did "all (Jehoiada) commanded." The verb צוה "command" denotes a position of superiority and authority over others. According to the Chr, the "subjects" of Jehoiada included everyone – even the young king who remains silent and obedient throughout the narrative.

The latter part of v. 8 continues to increase tension in the plot; a momentous event was about to occur. The fact that Jehoiada did not פטר "free" any of המחלקות

---

[204] Neither does 2 Kgs 11:8.

[205] Except for the king.

[206] Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 832.

[207] The phrase may also be merely a command to be with the king throughout the duration of the coup/coronation.

"the divisions" was unusual. The only other time the Chronicler records this type of "red alert" amongst the Temple personnel was just prior to the theophany at the dedication of the Temple (2 Chr 5:11).[208]

Some scholars understand v. 9 as a symbolic arming of the "captains of hundreds," the assumption being that the weaponry described was not tactically useful but used rhetorically to further tie the coup to YHWH's institution of the Davidic prerogative (cf. 1 Chr 18:7).[209] While it is impossible to know for sure, there is no reason to assume that weapons could not have been stored somewhere within the Temple, especially given the fact that the Chr does not describe the weaponry here as ornamental or sacred. During the Chr's own time, it is entirely possible that "real" weapons were stored at the Temple in Jerusalem which had become the most important social center during the Persian period. At any rate, it is important to note that the historicity of the narrative is beyond the scope of this investigation (and perhaps any). What can be said is that Jehoiada's leadership is once again the focus of the narrative; in addition to all the above, he distributed arms (whether real or symbolic is rather less important) to the ad hoc military assemblage that would overthrow the queen. Moreover, the agents of the coup collect their arms from the Temple, likely symbolizing a militaristic infusion of divine power to fuel the coup. Fully armed and ready, Jehoiada עמד "stationed" all the people at key positions around the Temple, by the altar and around the king.[210] Undoubtedly, the primary readership of Chronicles would have been impressed by the comprehensive leadership of Jehoiada to this point. Every contingency, strategy and implement had been overseen by the super-priest.

At last, the time is ready to crown the new monarch. The coronation ensues with the people bringing out the prince (into the courtyard?) and the presentation of the נזר "crown" and the עדות "testimony." In its verbal form, נזר may carry the idea of consecration to a deity (cf. Num 6:2; Hos 9:10); in this context, perhaps, the affirmation of the Davidic covenant with YHWH is in view (though נזר is never used in the Chr's account of the Davidic covenant in 1 Chr 17).[211] The meaning of the term עדות is uncertain but would almost certainly have evoked imagery of the ארן העדת "ark of the covenant" and with it, the Sinai covenant, the priest-king Moses and the Ten Commandments (Ex 40:20).[212] Whatever it was, it seems to be an integral part of the coronation process that would remind the people of the covenants (YHWH-king, king-people) that were an important part of a properly-functioning Judah.

---

[208] Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 127.

[209] Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 833; Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 316. It is important to note that 1 Chr 18:7 contains descriptive differences regarding the שלט "small shields." First the shields are described there as being שלטי הזהב "shields of gold" making them undoubtedly ornamental (gold being too soft a metal for warfare). Second, the shields are described as being brought to Jerusalem and not specifically to the Temple. Thus, there it is not necessary to assume a connection between 2 Chr 23:9 and 1 Chr 18:7.

[210] The account in 2 Kgs 11:11 does not mention Jehoiada's role in positioning all the people. Clearly, the Chr is interested in detailing Jehoiada's central role in the salvation of the line of David; he controlled every detail of the operation, from conception to the retaking of the throne and the crowning of the young king.

The coronation process is completed with the anointing of Joash by Jehoiada and his sons. It is important to note that while the people made Joash king in the ceremony, Jehoiada and his sons ratified that ceremony by משח "anointing" Joash and shouting יחי המלך "(long) live the king!" This Hebrew phrase also indicates the support of a group of people of the royal power of an emerging king (cf. 1 Sam 10:24; 2 Sam 16:16; 1 Kgs 1:25, 34, 39 [cf. the Chr's *Vorlage* 2 Kgs 11:12]).[213]

The bulk of the references which employ the root משח "anoint" occur with regard to the establishment of the Davidic dynasty.[214] In Chronicles, the tradition of David's anointing may be seen in 1 Chr 11:3; 14:8; 16:22. Solomon's anointing is described in 1 Chr 29:22 along with Zadok the priest. During Solomon's dedication of the Temple, his anointing is confirmed by his own prayer (2 Chr 6:42). The next king whose anointing is referred to is the prophet/king Jehu, who was, according to the Chr, anointed by YHWH to "cut off" the house of Ahab (2 Chron 22:7). משח "anoint" then occurs at the covert enthronement of young Joash. It is significant that all of these instances have in common special circumstances, especially those in which some change of dynasty or dramatic cultic situation is described. David was anointed after Saul had been rejected by YHWH; Solomon was anointed for his work in establishing and dedicating YHWH's

---

[211] Robert J. Way, "נזר," *NIDOTTE*, elec. ed. The נזר could also be worn by the high priest (Ex 29:6). It is possible that Jehoiada himself was wearing the crown prior to Joash's coronation, since the crown was evidently in possession of the members of the coup prior to the coup itself. If this was the case, Jehoiada's stature is again raised to the level of priest-king.

[212] Peter Enns, "עדות," *NIDOTTE*, elec. ed. The term often refers to nonspecified laws or commands from God to his people, particularly in the Psalter (e.g., 19:7 [8]; 119:14, 88, 129, 157; cf. 1 Kgs 2:3; 2 Kgs 23:3; 1 Chr 29:19; 2 Chr 34:31; Neh 9:34; Jer 44:23).

[213] See G. Gerleman, "חיה," *TLOT*, elec. ed. In each of the above cases in Sam-Kgs, the monarch's succession was disputed in some way, with the general population ultimately conferring power with the phrase יחי המלך; Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 129.

[214] See the discussion of משח in Trent C. Butler, "Forgotten Passage from a Forgotten Era (1 Chr 16:8-36)," *VT* 28 (1978): 142-150; see also John N. Oswalt, "משח," *NIDOTTE*, elec. ed.

Temple; Jehu was anointed by YHWH to shatter Israel's Omride dynasty. In this pericope, Joash was anointed to replace the apostate queen Athaliah, a key figure of the Omride dynasty who had threatened the Davidic dynasty in Judah. According to the Chr, "anointing" seems to involve the element of particular selection and divine empowerment/protection that the act of anointing represented. In every case in Chronicles except for 1 Chr 14:8, anointing is done under divine auspices. Moreover, the fact that Joash *was* anointed suggests that Athaliah *was not*, and that she could rightfully be deposed without divine repercussion.

Athaliah Alone: Treason and Death: 2 Chr 23:12-15

In v. 12, the setting of the tragic/comic story changes to focus on the plight of the queen mother. Upon hearing the noise following the coronation of the king, Athaliah comes to the Temple to the people, ostensibly to see what is going on. It is important to keep in mind that this is a carefully constructed rhetorical (hi)story of the deposing of the queen.[215]

Athaliah is entirely unaware of the coronation of Joash until it is too late. When she hears the קול "noise" of the people running and praising the king, she comes to the Temple, apparently unaccompanied (where was her royal entourage?). The root הלל "praise" is used (2x) uniquely in this passage (in vv. 12-13). What is unique about the two usages here is that הלל is used to describe the people's reaction to Joash as newly appointed king. In every other case in Chr, the root is used to describe divine worship. While this is not to suggest deification of the newly appointed king, the coronation of Joash is an exceptional event in Chronicles; the maximum positive attention the Chr may give to any person is contrasted with the people's rejection of Athaliah. Perhaps the affair was understood to be so saturated by divine blessing that the Chr allowed the young king to accept YHWH's praise on behalf of him.

---

[215] While Athaliah appears quite the fool here, it should be clear that what would have actually happened would likely have been quite different. See, e.g., Ktziah Spanier, "The Northern Israelite Queen Mother in the Judaean Court: Athalia and Abi," in *Boundaries of the Ancient Near Eastern World: a Tribute to Cyrus H. Gordon* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 136-149. Spanier points out that in Israel/Judah as in the ANE, queens were powerful individuals who were central to the amalgamation of political allies via the marriage-treaty. Not only involved in political processes, most queens were involved in the state's religious processes, sometimes as the head priestess of the local cult (2 Chr 24:7). Spanier argues that Athaliah would have been a powerful force in Israel/Judah from Jehoshapat to Jehoram to Ahaziah and then to her own six year reign. Evidence of Athaliah's tenacity as a ruler may be seen, then, from her influence over the reigns of several monarchs in both Israel and Judah.

The Chr's depiction of the queen is comically tragic. The political leader of Judah was totally alone in her greatest hour of need. The קול may be understood in three ways moving from the general to the specific: as a general commotion (i.e., a public disturbance), as the symbolic, unified voice of a disenfranchised people (ruled by a female tyrant) or as a proclamation (i.e., that Joash was now the ruler of Judah). A democratic element continues to permeate the Chr's story; the people are mentioned twice in the verse. Because of the leadership of Jehoiada, the coup was supported by every person in Judah; the locus of the activity climaxes at the Temple from which Athaliah has been excluded until this point.

As Athaliah approaches the house of YHWH, תרא "she sees" the celebration and realizes that her downfall is imminent. At the beginning of the pericope (2 Chr 22:10), Athaliah "sees" that her son is dead and takes that opportunity to commit treason that she now decries herself. It is quite possible that the root ראה "see" was intentionally used by the Chr as an inclusio, to indicate the beginning and ending of Athaliah's reign. She looks and והנה המלך עומד על עמודו במבוא "behold the king standing by his pillar at the entrance."[216] This is a statement which contrasts the power of the new king and the weakness of the now-deposed queen. The king עומד "is standing" (a term that suggests strength) by עמודו "his pillar," a nominal form of the root עמד "stand" which may be a reference to Jachin or Boaz that stood at the entrance of the Temple; a further reference to royal power supported by the blessing of YHWH.[217] The new king is further surrounded by והשרים והחצצרות "princes and trumpeters," more references to the mixture of cultic and political power. Moreover, all the people are singing and playing trumpets; the entire country of Judah is rejoicing at the queen's deposition. The ultimate ironic climax occurs at the end of v. 13. Athaliah, silenced by the Chr until now, tears her clothes[218] and cries, קשר קשר "Treason, Treason!" In fact, by Athaliah's own actions, "treason" had *not* occurred; power should only be held by those powerful enough to seize it (as she had done herself).[219]

---

[216] Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 834, argues that the Chr has changed his *Vorlage* in 2 Kgs 11:14 from כמשפט "according to the custom" to במבוא "at the entrance," "in full accord with the Chronicler's view that no one, not even the king, was allowed into the Temple." It seems Japhet has overlooked the fact that Joash had lived in the Temple (i.e., it was his home!) for six years up to this point.

[217] Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 183. See also Carol L. Meyers, "Jachin and Boaz in Religious and Political Perspective," *CBQ* 45 (1983): 167-178 and Keith W. Whitelam, "The Symbols of Power: Aspects of Royal Propaganda in the United Monarchy," *BA* 49, no. 3 (1986): 166-173.

[218] The tearing of clothing in Israel has several symbolic meanings. It is s symbol of intense remorse (Gen 37:29), of mourning (2 Sam 1:11-12), a loss of social status (Num 20:26) and submission to another's authority (2 Sam 1:2); see Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 834.

By this point in the narrative there can be no doubt in the mind of the Chr's readers; the Davidic line would be saved through Joash. However, the entire salvific process was infused with references to the Temple and owed its very inception to the high priest and various others who were "holy" to YHWH. If the story was accepted as authoritative by the literati in Yehud, the second Temple and its staff would have certainly emerged as central figures in the political history of Judah/Yehud.[220]

The narrative spotlight does not last for long on the child-king. The focus quickly turns from Joash back to יהוידע הכהן "Jehoiada the priest" who is still in charge of the forces; three military terms are used in rapid succession. Jehoiada is commander of the שרי המאות "commanders of hundreds," who themselves commanded החיל "the army." To spite, it seems, the former monarch, the soldiers are asked to bring out Athaliah מבית השדרות "from between the ranks" in a public display of humiliation (and perhaps to ensure that she would not escape). The order also ensures that Jehoiada will not spill Athaliah's blood on Temple grounds and thereby preserve its sanctity; indeed, YHWH prevented David from building the Temple because he had spilled too much blood (1 Chr 22:8; 28:3).[221] Jehoiada also orders that והבא אחריה "anyone following" Athaliah also be put to death. When Athaliah is brought as far as שער הסוסים בית המלך "the horse gate of the king's house" she is executed. It is unclear where exactly this gate was. Some scholars distinguish it from the gate of the same name (Jer 31:40; Neh 3:28); others do not.[222] What appears to be important is the fact that this is an allusion to the death of Athaliah's (likely) mother Jezebel who was trampled by horses (2 Kgs 9:33).[223]

---

[219] Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 183.

[220] In fact, even the anointing of the king on behalf of YHWH by the high priest and his sons could be understood to allude to symbolic subordination of the royal throne to the priesthood. This is contra Jacob M. Myers, *II Chronicles: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (AB 13; Garden City: Doubleday, 1965), 131, who argues that the king "holds the center of the stage" in the narrative.

[221] Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 183, attempts to draw an ironic connection between Jehoiada's concern that blood not be spilled in the Temple with the fact that his son Zechariah was murdered at the Temple (2 Chr 24:21). While interesting, Dillard's connection fails in that the Chr was careful to place the death of Zechariah בחצר בית יהוה "in the court of the house of YHWH," an area that is accessible to laymen and considered by the Chr to be outside of the Temple (cf. 2 Chr 23:5 and 23:6, which draws the explicit distinction).

[222] Those who wish to distinguish the gates include Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 183 and Dale C. Liid, "Horse Gate," *ABD* 3:290; Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 132 does not.

[223] On these issues, see Lisa A. Heidorn, "The Horses of Kush," *JNES* 56 (1997): 105-114 and Jim Wilhoit et al., eds., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 400-401.

Jehoiada's Reforms Result in Peace and Quiet – 2 Chr 23:16-21

After the death of Athaliah, narrative focus shifts once again to the leadership of Jehoiada. He makes a covenant between himself, the people and the king, that they would be people of YHWH. It is significant that the king is again relegated to the background; the Chr could just as easily have changed the positions of the parties to this new covenant. Indeed, the Chr appears to have altered his *Vorlage* in 2 Kgs 11:17, which describes two covenants instead of only one: one "between YHWH and between the king and between the people," and another "between the king and between the people." The Chr's covenant does not have YHWH as a party to the covenant but rather the covenant commits the people to obedience to YHWH לעם ליהוה "for people for YHWH."[224] The only other place this phrase appears in the Bible (other than the Chr's *Vorlage* 2 Kgs 11:17) is in Deut 27:9; it is quite possible that the Chr's readers would have been very familiar with the passage and would have connected the cross-textual allusion. In the narrative on Gerizim and Ebal, Moses and the Levitical priests announced to the people that they were now the people of YHWH. Failure to follow the commands of Moses (and his staff) would result in a chain of covenant curses (Deut 27:9-26). Again, the key is *unspecified* curses; this narrative would leave open the opportunity for "creative" retribution on YHWH's people and/or rhetorical teaching at the convenience of the Temple staff during the time of the Chr.

As such, not only is Jehoiada the central character and broker of divine knowledge in the overall narrative, he becomes the chief party to the (one) new

---

Equine imagery in the Hebrew Bible is often negative; this may be attributed to the fact that horses were often viewed as a measure of military might not sanctioned by YHWH. YHWH's people were not to trust in flesh (be it human or beast; cf. Is 31:3), nor were they to fear "fleshly enemies" when YHWH was with them (cf. Deut 20:1). Therefore, Israel/Judah's monarchs were not to multiply horses (Deut 17:16). Moreover, throughout Israel's history various stories demonstrated YHWH's superiority to horses and chariots. At the Red Sea YHWH annihilated Pharaoh's horses and chariots (Ex 14:9, 23; 15:1, 19–21; Deut 11:4; Is 43:17). At the waters of Merom he defeated the Canaanite coalition and its hordes of horses and chariots; he then commanded Joshua to burn the chariots and hamstring the horses (Josh 11:4–11; cf. 2 Sam 8:4). At Taanach he defeated Sisera's charging horses and iron chariots by causing the Kishon River to flash flood (Judg 4:15; 5:4–5, 19–22). Prophetic literature also carries this anti-equine ideology; it often envisioned future battles when YHWH would destroy the horses of his enemies (Jer 50:37; 51:21; Mic 5:10; Hag 2:22; Zech 10:5; 12:4; 14:15). As scavengers devoured their carcasses, YHWH's superiority would be apparent to all (Ezek 39:17–21). When YHWH finally established his kingdom of peace, warhorses would disappear from the streets of Jerusalem (Zech 9:10). Within such an anti-equine context, one can see the potential rhetorical impact on the Chr's primary readership who would have been familiar with many of these anti-equine traditions. Yet within the book of Chronicles, horses are often also equated with positive wealth and strength, especially within the Solomonic traditions (2 Chr 1:14, 16-17; 8:6; 9:24-25, 28). Perhaps equine imagery is best understood in this narrative as a symbol of power; in other words, Athaliah, at the bloody culmination of her reign, died symbolically at the Horse Gate, a symbol of military (and by implication, royal/political) might.

[224] Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 834-835.

covenant created binding religious, public and political leadership to Yahwism, while subverting the importance of the king. As Johnstone argues, the details of the covenant are conspicuously absent.[225] This would almost certainly have provided Temple rhetors of the story in the Chr's own time a pedagogical opportunity; as brokers of the divine in Yehud, this story could have been used to "fix" whatever cultic problems existed, as interpreted by Temple staff. Of course, to ensure the people would obey, curses and blessings could be promised based on "historical" narratives that were malleable enough to allow considerable flexibility for Temple rhetors during their interaction with the public.[226]

According to v. 17, Jehoiada's rhetoric worked. Without hesitation, all the people went to the house of Baal (divine competition to YHWH for the support of the people) and tore it down ויבאו כל העם בית הבעל ויתצהו "And all the people went to the house of Baal and tore it down."[227] The verb נתץ "break/tear down" is found six times in Chronicles (2 Chr 23:17; 31:1; 33:3; 34:4,7; 36:19) and is usually used in the context of smashing the cultic objects of the Baals and/or Asherim (except for 36:19 where Nebudchadnezzar smashes the wall of Jerusalem prior to the exile). By this, the Chr places Jehoiada squarely in the ranks of the two most important reforming kings of Judah – Hezekiah and Josiah. The plot continues its "historical" irony as the people kill מתן כהן הבעל "Mattan, the priest of Baal" לפני המזבחות "in the presence of the altars (of Baal)." Whereas Joash was kept in the safety of YHWH's Temple (i.e., YHWH is a capable god), the priest of Baal is killed in his temple, in the presence of his own divinity who does nothing. Moreover, whereas Jehoiada made certain not to spill the blood of Athaliah in YHWH's Temple to preserve its (and YHWH's) sanctity, precisely the opposite occurred during Mattan's murder in the temple of Baal.[228]

---

[225] Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 134.

[226] This is not to be overly skeptical of the motivations of the religious elite in Jerusalem; only to call attention to the fact that some of the most dramatic "historical" narratives in the Hebrew Bible contained enough ambivalence to allow various meaning in various situations. See the discussion in Patrick and Scult, *Rhetoric and Biblical Interpretation* , 38-44 and my comments in chapter one.

[227] It is unknown when/how the Baal temple was built. As Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 183, argues, "[t]he Omrides had become so identified with Baalism that coups against that dynasty inevitably entailed religious reforms and the suppression of Baalism." As I have argued above, in the world of the text, this is an ideology of what "good" rulers and "bad" rulers do. Athaliah, a "bad" ruler, (must have) developed Baalism in Judah, while Jehoiada a "good" ruler causes the instruments of such Baalism to be destroyed.

[228] Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 134.

After "crushing the competition," Jehoiada restores order to his own Temple. Jehoiada places the פקדה "offices" or "officers"[229] of the Temple ביד הכהנים הלוים "in the hand of the priests the Levites." This phrase has been variously understood to mean "the Levitical priests" (so NASB, NRSV, NAB and JPS) or "the priests and the Levites" (so RSV and NJB) or "the priests, the Levites" (so NKJV). The question of whether this group was made up of one group or two is not of primary concern here; rather it is that Jehoiada invokes the Davidic organization of the Temple (1 Chr 23:1-26:32) in order that what was written in the תורת משה "law of Moses" would be done. Here again are examples of ambiguity where interpreters of the text during the Chr's time and later could/should create meaning for the laity of their own time. His readers are directed only very generally to the law of Moses, and do not know what law(s) the Chr is specifically referring to nor which specific corpus they might check.[230] Yet the text demands an "historical" appreciation of why Jehoiada restores order to the Temple in the way that he does; he does *not* (appear to) make up his own new rules willy-nilly but governs according to laws from Israel/Judah's glorious past.[231]

Finally, once the Temple had been properly restored, Jehoiada appoints השוערים על שערי בית יהוה "the gatekeepers over the gates of the house of YHWH," to protect the Temple from those who would enter it in an טמא "unclean" state.[232] The sanctity of the Temple has been important to Jehoiada in the Chr's account (23:6, 14, 19), likely because the Chr wanted his readership to likewise reject any activities that would profane the Temple.[233] Of course, exactly what *constituted* prohibited cultic activities would have been at times vague, creating the need for readers and interpreters of Mosaic and Davidic laws, maintaining a requirement for the religious elite.

---

[229] In the account in 2 Kgs 11:18, פקדה seems to carry the meaning of "officers" or "appointed people" while the Chr seems to have used the same word to mean "offices" or "administrative posts."

[230] It is possible that the primary readership would have known more of the specifics of the Mosaic laws in this passage but it is equally possible that the text was left intentionally ambiguous.

[231] The usage of a nation's "glorious past" by a ruler/usurper was relatively common in the ANE. During Cyrus the Great's reforms after he conquered Babylon, he appealed to his piety in keeping Marduk's (ancient) laws where the deposed Nabonidus had failed. See Kuhrt, "The Cyrus Cylinder and Achaemenid Imperial Policy," 88-89.

[232] In 2 Kgs 11:18, only פקדה "officers" are appointed over the Temple, with no concern for the sanctity of the Temple explicitly mentioned.

[233] In the Chr's own day, during the absence of a Judean monarchy, the Temple was the nation's most important institution in terms of cultural self-awareness. As Yahwists, the Chr's readership would have had a vested interest in controlling and maintaining access to the Temple, whereby their social positions would be enforced and strengthened.

Now that Athaliah has been executed, the temple of Baal destroyed and the Temple of YHWH restored, the child-king is marched from the Temple and through the upper gate to the palace. At this point, none of the Temple staff is mentioned, perhaps to imply that the group was busy with its new positions. However, the military, nobility and the public all bring the king through the upper gate[234] to the palace where he is sat on the royal throne, the final symbolic act in the realization of Jehoiada's coup. As a direct result of the coup, the people rejoice and the city enjoys שקט "quiet." This root is used in Chr seven times (1 Chr 4:40; 22:92; Chr. 13:23; 14:4-5; 20:30; 23:21) and in every case refers to the state of a land "the condition of absence of strife, when the whole system is in equilibrium"[235] (or polity), usually Judah, and usually refers to the state of the land under a given ruler.[236]

Athaliah's death בחרב "by the sword" is mentioned again and may be seen either as an additional benefit to the peace of the land (i.e., that the land was peaceful *and* a Davidide (non-Omride) was ruler) or Athaliah's death may be understood as the cause for the quiet of Jerusalem and Judah (i.e., that the land was peaceful *because* the Omride ruler and her cult had been overthrown and replaced by a Davidic-Yahwistic rulership. Moreover, the Chr's lack of recording a regnal summary for Athaliah further discredits her reign while preserving the accuracy of YHWH's oracle to David (1 Chr 17).

Joash's Regnal Summary, Familial Details and Jehoiada's Continuing Importance: 2 Chr 24:1-3[237]

In the opening description (v. 1) of Joash as king, two numbers immediately set the tone for the early reign of Joash; "Joash was *seven* years old when he became king, and he reigned *forty* years." To the Chr and his primary readership these numbers could have been taken to represent a new, fresh and positive reign, given the narratological adumbration of Athaliah's reign. "Of the numbers that carry symbolic meaning in biblical usage, seven is the most important. It is used to signify completeness or totality."[238] This is especially true when used in the context of time. "Underlying all such use of the number seven lies the seven-day week, which, according to Gen 1:1-2:3 and Ex 20:11, belongs to the God-given structure of creation. God completed his own work of creation in seven days (Gen 2:2), and seven days constitute a complete cycle of time."[239] To the Chr's readers, the fact that Joash was seven at the beginning of his reign would have contrasted the evil Athaliah's six year reign, while suggesting a blessing on Joash's reign.[240] Similarly, the number 40 as a description of a monarch's reign is only used by the Chr to describe the reign of Solomon (1 Chr 29:27; 2 Chr 9:30). Thus, the Chr's readers may have associated the dawn of Joash's reign with "divine timing" as well as a long and fruitful reign. Joash's mother's name is also mentioned as a usual biographical description amongst monarchs during the period of the divided kingdom (cf. 2 Chr 12:13; 13:2; 20:31; 22:2; 24:1; 25:1; 26:3; 27:1; 29:1).

---

[234] Again gates are mentioned here, illustrating that Jehoiada's troops have full control of the main access points of the city.

[235] Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 136.

[236] The exception is 1 Chr 4:40 where the descendants of Simeon are credited with conquering the land of Gedor during a military raid under Hezekiah.

[237] It should be noted that while Jehoiada's coup, Athaliah's death and Joash's coronation (i.e., the first section of the story) was changed somewhat by the Chr, it actually follows the account in Kings fairly closely. The reign of Joash (i.e., the second section), on the other hand, is thought by most to have been heavily edited (Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 839-840; Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 188; Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 318). I will therefore more often compare this account with the account in Kings (something I wished to avoid overdoing in the first section) in an attempt to understand what the Chr wished his readers to understand about the "history" of Joash. I am convinced that the Chr's primary readership would have had their own questions about why certain events were obviously recorded differently and during this process of investigation they would have had the resources (time, literacy and access to scrolls) to carefully compare and contrast the two accounts to create meaning for themselves from the revised history of Israel, while not ignoring the Kings account which had already become a classical, authoritative work by the middle to late Persian period.

In v. 2, another description of Jehoiada is injected into the regnal summary of Joash: ויעש יואש הישר בעיני יהוה כל ימי יהוידע הכהן "And Joash did right in the eyes of YHWH all the days of Jehoiada the priest."[241] The Chr forms the beginning of an inclusio here with the phrase כל ימי יהוידע "all the days of Jehoiada" and ends with the same phrase in v. 14, which serves to delimit the first (the good) part of Joash's reign. This introduction specifically ties whatever righteousness Joash might demonstrate to Jehoiada; effectively granting Jehoiada any glory that might be associated with Joash's rule. To the first readers of Chronicles in Yehud, it would have been a clear sign that YHWH's blessing on this era came primarily through Jehoiada and only secondarily through Joash, a concept that would help make sense of Yehud in the Achaemenid Empire where YHWH's chosen (2 Chr 36:22-23) ruled in absentia, while the Jerusalemite priesthood wielded increasingly greater power.

---

[238] Wilhoit et al., eds., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, 774.

[239] Wilhoit et al., eds., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, 774.

[240] Wilhoit et al., eds., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, 774.

[241] The Chr changes his source in 2 Kings 12:2 [3] from Jehoash doing הישר בעיני יהוה כל ימיו אשר הורהו יהוידע הכהן "what was right in the eyes of YHWH *all his days* because Jehoiada the priest instructed him." In doing so, the Chr is able to break up Joash's reign into a successful part (because of Jehoiada) and an unsuccessful part (because of the lack of Jehoiada); see Japhet, *Ideology*, 174-175.

V. 3 appears intentionally ambiguous. The phrase וישא לו יהוידע נשים שתים may be read as "and he (Jehoiada) took for him(self) two wives" (reflexive) or as "and he (Jehoiada) took to him (Joash) two wives" (dative).[242] While many scholars prefer the dative meaning because the Chr often uses numerous progeny to illustrate divine blessing on a Davidic monarch (1 Chr 14:2-7; 25:4-5; 26:4-5; 2 Chr 11:18-23; 13:21),[243] the reflexive sense would associate Jehoiada with two ancient ancestral traditions. The phrase ויולד בנים ובנות "and he had sons and daughters" is found only in Gen 5 and 11 (a total of 18x). In Gen 5, Adam and his son Seth established the line of righteous antediluvians culminating with Noah in Genesis 5, while in Gen 11, the line of Shem, father of all Semites, is recorded culminating in the introduction of Abraham, Shem's tenth-generation descendant, the first patriarch and the "beginning" of the historiographical traditions of ancient Israel. When seen from this perspective, it is possible that the Chr's readers would have made a connection between Jehoiada's "salvation" of the Davidic dynasty and Israel's very existence from its earliest "historical" traditions. In this sense, the priesthood's historical legacy (here headed by Jehoiada) allowed "Israel" to continue to exist and even flourish. Perhaps the important point is that whether a dative or reflexive meaning is taken, Jehoiada is presented positively. If Jehoiada chose the wives for Joash, he is not only acting as Joash's father but acts well as the wives chosen by him are apparently rather fertile.[244] In this case, the Davidic line has not only been saved by Jehoiada but has renewed vigor with a new generation of offspring. If the reflexive meaning is taken, Jehoiada is positively compared to the earliest traditions of Israel/Judah. Perhaps, as (re)readers of Chronicles, the literati would have kept both meanings in mind simultaneously.

Joash's First Attempt at Temple Restoration: 2 Chr 24:4-7

At some point, Joash decides לחדש "to restore" the Temple in Jerusalem. Within the narrative, this makes sense because after some years of Yahwistic neglect, the Temple would have suffered deterioration (v. 7), especially if public monies had been diverted by Athaliah and Mattan from YHWH's Temple to a temple of Baal.

---

[242] Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 841.

[243] So Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 188; Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 137; Myers, *II Chronicles*, 137;Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 319. Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 841, agrees that the dative sense is more likely but allows for the possibility of the reflexive meaning. However, she does not explore the exegetical allusions that one might find if the reflexive meaning is taken seriously.

[244] Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 841.

Symbolically, the attribution of temple restoration demonstrated Joash's piety. The pious king as temple restorer is a common ANE motif.[245] According to inscriptions on the Cyrus Cylinder, Cyrus the Great demonstrated his piety in Babylon as he restored the neglected temple of Marduk.[246] Being an international ruler, Cyrus appealed to various local gods; the biblical tradition records two instances of Cyrus' piety towards YHWH as god of Judah, during his aid in building a temple for the Yehudites in Jerusalem (2 Chr 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-11). Conversely, the Chr may have been actually making a subversive statement about the monarchy. According to Johnstone, the phrase היה עם לב יואש לחדש את בית יהוה "it was in the heart of Joash to restore the house of YHWH" may have been carefully crafted by the Chr to demonstrate tension between the Levites and the king. David had used a similar expression when he announced that he intended to build the Temple (1 Chr 22:7; 28:2) and was immediately admonished by YHWH via Nathan. Seen this way, Joash is likened to an impetuous David and Jehoiada is likened to a YHWH-revering Nathan.[247]

Joash then commands the priests and Levites to do an annual circuit of the cities of Judah to collect כסף "silver" for the restoration of the Temple.[248] Moreover, they are commanded to תמהרו "act quickly;" however, the Levites ignore the command altogether.[249] In addition to temporal urgency, the Chr has made a number of significant changes from his *Vorlage* in 2 Kgs 12. First, the Dtr records the collection of money as a passive act by the priesthood, whereas the Chr commands the priests (and Levites) to actively collect funds from the citizens of Judah. Second, the Dtr suggests that the money for the upkeep of the Temple was to be collected voluntarily כל כסף אשר יעלה על לב איש להביא בית יהוה "all the money which any man's heart prompts him to bring into the house of YHWH"; the Chr suggests that the tax for the Temple was imposed upon the people. Third, the Dtr understands Joash's intentions as being that יחזקו את בדק הבית "they (the priests) would repair the damage to the Temple," whereas the Chr understands Joash's intentions as more comprehensive; Joash does not wish to only "patch up" the Temple one time, he desires an annual tax for the upkeep of the Temple in perpetuity.

---

[245] See also Kirk Grayson, "Historiography," *ABD* 3:205-206. Grayson argues that "[r]oyal inscriptions in Sumer, Babylonia, and Assyria were originally written as pious reports by the ruler to a god that he had performed some deed to honor his commitment as representative of the god on earth. This usually involved a building enterprise such as the excavation of an irrigation canal or the construction of a temple."

[246] Kuhrt, "The Cyrus Cylinder and Achaemenid Imperial Policy," 85-87.

[247] Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 137.

[248] An ostracon has been recovered from ca. the second half of the seventh century BCE that describes a royal declaration of obligatory contribution of כסף "silver" (coinage) to the house of YHWH but even this is some century and a half after the historical Joash. Pierre Bordreuil et al., "King's Command and Widow's Plea: Two New Hebrew Ostraca of the Biblical Period," *Near Eastern Archaeology* 61 (1998): 2-5; 7-13. See also William W. Hallo and K. Lawson Younger, eds., *Context of Scripture II* (3vols.; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 174-175. The names listed on the potsherd may include Joash and Zechariah (son of Jehoiada); though this is far from certain, due, in part, because of the paleographic analysis which suggests a date later than is generally accepted for the reign of Joash. See also the evaluation by Arnaud Serandour, "King, Priest and Temple," *Near Eastern Archaeology* 61 (1998): 6, which evaluates the historiographical ideology of the biblical building programs of the Judean kings which seem to reflect the religio/political practices of a time when the king of Judah/Yehud was no longer a Judean. While the ostracon include the names and practices of various individuals from the biblical texts, Serandour concludes that the ostracon reflects monarchic practices of the latter half of the seventh century more accurately than the biblical stories of the Dtr or Chr, which were prone to heighten the role of the priesthood.

[249] The priests are not explicitly blamed here for their disobedience, but since Jehoiada is questioned about the failure to obey the king, one may assume that Joash considers the priests to be just as culpable as the Levites.

The issue of the Levites' neglect has presented difficulties for scholars. Williamson argues that 5b-6 are later additions. He argues that while "…the substance of 5a accords well with the Chronicler's narrative, the substance of of 5b-6 does not."[250] Williamson admits that this type of criticism is "highly speculative" but assumes that verses which do not fit with his idea of the Chr's worldview cannot be original. While it is impossible to say with certainty if 5b-6 are late additions or not, I would argue that Williamson has not considered one significant possibility; that the Chr is once again highlighting the power of the Temple staff which here appears to overshadow even the monarch's power – a point of view that would certainly have been possible as it reflected the reality of the Chr's own time when the Jerusalem Temple effectively ruled the local population while the ruling monarch lived far away in Persia (though a local Persian governor would have been present). To the Chr's readers, the מדי שנה בשנה "annual" (the phrase is an idiom that translates roughly to "from year to year")[251] monies that were to be collected may have appeared much like the מנחה "tribute/tax" imposed on people by kings (cf. 1 Chr 18:2, 6; 23:29; 2 Chr 9:24; 17:5, 11; 26:8; 32:23). The Levites pay no heed to the imperative orders of Joash צאו to "go out" וקבצו "and collect" but may have been within their rights to do so. It is possible that a new tax was, at first, rejected by the Levites (and priests), according to the story, on the basis of a conservative interpretation of the constraints of the monarch in Deut 17 (cf. 2 Chr 19:11), which specifically places the Levites in the position to check the power of Israel's king. From this perspective, the Chr's original readers could have viewed the story as an "historical" example of the Temple's power vetoing the power of the Judean monarch.[252]

---

[250] Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 319-320. I am not dismissing Williamson's arguments which are substantial; he provides seven lines of arguments of incongruity between the disputed verses and the balance of the Chr's narrative (which need not be repeated here).

[251] Cf. 1 Sam 7:16; Zech 14:16; Isa 66:23.

While the chronology of the events is not clear, at some point, Joash calls Jehoiada to question him about the situation. This time, however, Joash specifically invokes Mosaic Law relating to taxes for the Tabernacle and argues that this Law was yet binding on the Yehudite Temple. Scholars are divided as to which Law is being referred to[253] but it appears that the reference in v. 6 is to the so-called "law of the half shekel."[254] It has been pointed out that the Chr often draws parallels between אהל העדות "the tent of the testimony" and the Temple, demonstrating that Moses and the tabernacle continued to be an important link in Israel's history during the monarchy, as Joash applied laws pertaining to the tabernacle to the Temple.[255]

V. 7 is something of an interjection, once again deriding עתליהו המרשעת "the wicked Athaliah" כי "because" her sons had פרצו את בית "broken into the Temple" and stolen YHWH's cultic objects and used them for the Baal cult.[256] The particle כי here helps to draw the reader out of the entanglement between Jehoiada and Joash and places the blame of the narrative on the shoulders of Athaliah, as the embodiment of evil that she was. Thus, culpability for the damage to the Temple is more or less removed from the Temple staff; priestly negligence was not to be considered a factor.[257]

---

[252] Others have argued that 5b-6 is a sharp criticism of the Levites by the Chr; cf. Martin J. Selman, *2 Chronicles: A Commentary* (TOTC 10b; Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 452-453; J. A. Thompson, *1, 2 Chronicles* (NAC 9; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 314-315; R. J. Coggins, *The First and Second Books of the Chronicles* (CBC; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 238. This argument may be supported by the fact that the Chr uses the term דרש "seek" during his questioning of Jehoiada. Superficially, the questioning would have been simply why Jehoiada, as leader of the Temple staff did not require his staff to follow the king's orders. However, דרש would likely also have called to mind the meaning of "seeking" YHWH in Chronicles as something that the righteous did as contrasted by "forsaking" (usually denoted by עזב) YHWH as something that the evil ones did in Chronicles. For more on the "seeking" aspect of the Chr's theology, see Schaefer, "The Significance of Seeking God in the Purpose of the Chronicler," 54-70.

[253] Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 138, argues that exactly which law is being invoked is "unclear" but suggests Ex 30:11-16 as a possibility. Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 844, cites the same reference as Johnstone but is careful to point out differences between the ancient Laws and the Chr's understanding of the ancient Laws. Other commentaries confidently cite passages like Ex 30:12-16 and 38:25-28; cf. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 321; Myers, *II Chronicles*, 137; Leslie C. Allen, "The First and Second Books of Chronicles," in *The First and Second Books of Kings, The First and Second Books of Chronicles, The Book of Ezra, the Book of Nehemiah, the Book of Esther, Additions to Esther, The Book of Tobit, The Book of Judith* (ed. Leander E. Keck; *NIB 3*; Nashville: Abingdon, 1999), 299-660, 580; Coggins, *Chronicles*, 238.

[254] See J. Liver, "The Ransom of the Half Shekel," in *Yehezkel Kaufmann Jubilee Volume* (ed. M. Haran; Jerusalem: 1960), 54-67 and E. A. Speiser, "Census and Ritual Expiation in Mari and Israel," *BASOR* 149 (1958): 17-25.

[255] Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 188; Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 319; Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 844.

[256] These "sons" are unnamed and may or may not be biological; they may refer to anyone who had been willingly doing Athaliah's bidding (i.e., עתליהו המרשעת בניה = "the individuals belonging to the ilk of Athaliah"). See Thompson, *1, 2 Chronicles* , 315 and Selman, *2 Chronicles* , 452.

Joash's Second Attempt at Temple Restoration: 2 Chr 24:8-14

In v. 8, Joash abandons his original plan, possibly having been seen as too intrusive and thus rejected by the priests and Levites who ignored the original order. Whatever the reasons for the taxation failure, Joash commands that a ארון "chest" be built and placed outside the gate of the Temple so that כל השרים וכל העם "all the officers and all the people" could bring their משאת "tribute" to the temple of their own volition.

The noun ארון "ark/chest" is found 52x in Chronicles, most usually (48x) in reference to the ark where the Ten Commandments were stored. The noun is used here 4x in rapid succession (vv. 8-11) to describe the chest used for collecting a Temple tax.[258] Therefore, it appears that the connotation of the cultic ark would have adumbrated the economic ark, no doubt complicated imagery for the Chr's reading audience. The description of the king's ארון should be discussed within the framework of Schaper's study of the Jerusalem Temple as an instrument of the Persian Empire's revenue collection service.[259] Schaper argues that the Persian administration had assumed the Neo-Babylonian taxation institution of the *quppu sa sari* "king's chest." One of the ways the Persians collected taxes from its satrapies was vis-à-vis the temple tithe, usually collected in the form of precious metals or in kind. This background is a likely explanation of why the taxation is described here in precious metals terminology rather than "in kind" (e.g., Ex 36:4-7).

The Chr's location of the chest as being outside by the gate of the house of YHWH (as opposed to the Dtr's placement of the chest being on the right side as one comes into the house of YHWH 2 Kgs 12:9 [10]) eliminates the necessity for the priests to collect the money from the people and then bring it into the chest within the Temple. This democratized the process of taxation as the general public would have had access to the chest at the gate of the Temple. When the taxation proclamation is made in Judah and Jerusalem, the Chr uses the phrase נתן קול "give voice." It is found 16x in the Bible and is most often used (8x - Ex 9:23; 1 Sam 12:17; 2 Sam 22:14; Jer 25:30; Joel 2:11; 3:16; Amos 1:2; Ps 18:13) in reference to the roaring/thundering voice or activity of YHWH but is also used (3x in Proverbs 1:20; 2:3; 8:1) with reference to Wisdom personified. The rhetorical effect on the Yehud literati would have been the reassurance that when divine tenets were properly conferred on the people, they were not imposing arbitrarily but with the very voice, authority and wisdom of the deity; especially when considered in the broader context of a thunderous voice.[260]

---

[257] Ralph W. Klein, "The Ironic End of Joash in Chronicles," in *For a Later Generation: The Transformation of Tradition in Israel, Early Judaism, and Early Christianity* (ed. Randal A. Argall et al.; Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2000), 116-127 [121].

[258] The only other two times ארון is used to describe a monetary collection device are found in the Chr's source (2 Kgs 12:9-10).

[259] Schaper, "Jerusalem Temple as an Instrument," 528-539.

Once the proclamation had been made, the money veritably pours in. In a unified effort, the monarchy and the Temple staff work together ויאספו כסף לרב "and they collected much money;" the description of the bountiful giving itself demonstrated that such an undertaking was favored by the deity.[261] The Chr's description of the administrative officials may provide evidence that he attempted to equate the (otherwise biblically unattested) high priest's economic official פקיד כהן הראש "high priest's officer" with that of the king סופר המלך "king's scribe"; this would eliminate such tedious accounting work from the high priest's duties.[262] This dual effort supports the argument above that Joash was unable to issue an edict without the support of the high priest, reflecting the Chr's own time when the high priest had penultimate power in Yehud.

The funds are dutifully turned over by the officials to the various tradesmen including masons, carpenters and metalworkers who go about repairing the Temple. The work on the Temple is described in terms of physical healing. Literally, the phrase ותעל ארוכה למלאכה בידם means something like "and the healing work went up (was restored) in their hands." The verb עלה "go up" is used with the noun ארוכה "heal" three other times (Jer 8:22; Jer 30:17; Neh 4:7).[263] In Jeremiah, the phrase is used symbolically of the habitually apostate Judah; in 8:22, there would be no immediate healing for Judah לא עלתה ארכת בת עמי "the health of the daughter of my people is not restored," while 30:17 reverses this כי אעלה ארכה לך "for I will restore you to health" and assures the reader that one day Judah will be healed. In Neh 4:7, the walls of Jerusalem were being similarly "healed" (or "restored") in opposition to various groups.

---

[260] It has been observed that ancient Near Eastern literature is replete with references to storm gods whose voices are associated with thunder. These include Baal in Ugaritic and Amarna texts and Adad in Akkadian texts. The biblical writers appropriated such imagery in descriptions of YHWH (cf. esp. Ps 29). On these issues see John Day, "Echoes of Baal's Seven Thunders and Lightnings in Psalm 29 and Habakkuk 3:9 and the Identity of the Seraphim in Isaiah 6," *VT* 29 (1979): 143-151.

[261] Thompson, *1, 2 Chronicles*, 316.

[262] Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 322. The account in 2 Kgs 12:10 uses the same term ספר המלך as the account in Chr but describes the high priest himself as working with the king's "scribe."

[263] Cf. Isa 58:8 which carries the imagery of healing but does not contain the verb עלה.

As the money continues to flow into the Temple coffers, the Temple is eventually restored (v. 14). Ensuring that the reader is aware of the abundance of the daily offerings, the Chr goes on to report that enough money was left over to refurbish the Temple's ritual implements that had been defiled/destroyed by the sons of Athaliah. The Chr seems to be more interested in the connection between the building of the Tabernacle and the Temple (Ex 25; 31:1-10) than in his *Vorlage* (2 Kgs 12:13); the former describes monies used for both construction and cultic utensils, the latter explicitly states that the money Joash collected was used only for wages, not cultic implements.[264] As Japhet observes, the fact that the כלים "cultic utensils" were ignored in the Kgs account would not have made sense to the Chr; they had to be restored in order to allow for the proper עלות בבית יהוה "burnt offerings in the Temple" which occur at the end of the verse.

Although certain scholars have understood 14b as lauding the faithfulness of Joash for a considerable number of years,[265] it rather appears that the Chr closes this positive era of Joash's reign with an ominous and infelicitous foreshadowing. The Temple was repaired both inside and out, the sacrifices were being offered but time was short; all this good occurred (only) during כל ימי יהוידע "all the days of Jehoiada." Accordingly, the narrative could be taken to mean that Joash's piety had never been of his own volition; i.e., the sole reason he sought YHWH *at all* was because of Jehoiada, thereby cheapening whatever good Joash did accomplish.[266] The phrase כל ימי יהוידע "all the days of Jehoiada" forms the final part of the inclusio begun in v. 2, where Joash did what was right in the eyes of YHWH כל ימי יהוידע הכהן "all the days of Jehoiada the priest." This is a rhetorical device that the Chr's readers would surely recognize; Joash's righteous reign was about to take a turn for the worse.

---

[264] Dillard, 2 *Chronicles*, 191; Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 846; Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 322.
[265] Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 322; Thompson, *1, 2 Chronicles*, 316.
[266] Other monarchs do right seemingly of their own accord; cf. e.g., Asa in 2 Chr 14:2; Jehoshaphat in 2 Chr 20:32; Uzziah in 2 Chr 26:4; etc.

Japhet observes three important aspects of the effects of Joash's (second) successful taxation initiative.[267] First, the monies that are brought to the temple are *not* brought because of an arbitrary order of the king; an "ancient" law of Moses was appealed to. The Chr apparently draws a connection between the construction of the Tabernacle and the Temple. In Ex 36:4-7, the people had similarly brought their contributions without restraint.[268] Yet giving joyfully and without restraint to YHWH's Temple was not *that* ancient; similar traditions tended to be maintained, especially during the reign of David when the Israelite assembly donated incredible amounts during his final days in preparation for the first Temple (1 Chr 29:1-9). Second, a קול "proclamation" was made in Judah and Jerusalem so that כל העם "all the people" (which explicitly included כל השרים "all the princes") would be made aware of their ancient obligation to support the Temple; rich and poor alike were to be involved in Temple contribution. Third, such taxation was not burdensome; indeed, the people ישמחו "rejoiced" when they brought in their tribute to the Temple. To these three observations, a fourth may be added. While the well-being of "all the people" may be implied during such periods of generosity, it is never made explicit here. The people are to contribute joyfully to the Temple, not for explicit gain (which may very well result from such obedience cf. e.g., 2 Chr 7:14) but because they are obligated by YHWH, via his agents, to do so. Taken together, all these issues could have been understood by the Yehud literati to make this a perfect pericope that provided "historical" grounding for recurrent second Temple taxation. The net effect, if all went well during a public oration of the pericope, would be that the second Temple coffers would similarly collect רב הכסף "much money" ליום "daily."[269]

---

[267] Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 845.

[268] Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 191.

[269] See also Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 191, who makes a similar observation regarding the homiletical relevance of this story to the Yehud literati.

Though they seem far less convincing to me, Francis Landy pointed out that at least three other interpretations of this story are possible:

a) it is a rare anti-Chronistic story of lazy Levites and an ineffective Jehoiada;

b) it is a story that praises Joash as a second Solomon, a monarch who wished for nothing but the best for the house of YHWH;

c) it is a story that contrasts the laziness of the Levites with the hard work of the people which may serve as a counterbalance to the otherwise glowing history of the Levites/priests.

Jehoiada Extolled in Death and Burial: 2 Chr 24:15-16

These two verses may have represented the Chr's ultimate standards for the Yehudite Temple's priesthood. One can easily imagine the priesthood using this passage to describe the ideal priest. Jehoiada is described here in extraordinary terms; he lives to an incredible age, he is buried in the royal tombs and is distinguished for his admirable deeds.[270] Likewise, the passage also lends itself to a palpable contrast with the death of Joash, the Davidic monarch who, without the support of his vice-regent, died rather poorly (2 Chr 24:25).[271]

To the Chr's primary readership, the number of years Jehoiada lived (130) would have indicated divine blessing. He had lived longer than Moses (120 years), Aaron (123 years) and Joshua (110 years). Moreover, the expression וישבע ימים "and he filled days" elsewhere demonstrated the blessings and honor of other legendary figures (e.g., Abraham - Gen 25:8; Isaac - 35:29; Job - Job 42:17).

Perhaps even more striking is the Chr's account of Jehoiada's burial ויקברהו בעיר דויד עם המלכים "and they buried him in the city of David with the kings." Two issues arise from this phrase. First, this seems to be formulaic language of a *royal* burial and the readers of the narrative seem to have been expected to recognize it as such. This is the only instance of the Chr reporting the death and burial of someone other than a king. A comparison of the kings' of Israel/Judah's deaths in Chronicles might be helpful to illustrate the gravity of this report.

Saul	1 Chr 10:12 - Buried in Jabesh-Gilead – home of the first uprising Saul put down (1 Sam 11:1-11). This is not the city of his fathers (Saul was born a Benjamite and later hailed from Gibeah), though cf. the Dtr account in 2 Sam 21:14.
David	1 Chr 29:28 – Location is not mentioned, though it was probably so obvious to the original readers of the text that David was buried in Jerusalem that the mention was deemed unnecessary; cf. 1 Kgs 2:10
Solomon	2 Chr 9:31 – Solomon said to have been buried "with his father David" i.e., in Jerusalem
Rehoboam	2 Chr 12:16 – Buried with his fathers "in the city of David"

---

[270] See also Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 143-144. He likewise argues that Jehoiada is "a paragon figure" who had a "superabundance of blessing" and who could "attain to royal dignity."

[271] Klein, "Joash in Chronicles," 126-127.

	even though he "did evil" (2 Chr 12:14)
Abijah	2 Chr 14:1 – Buried with his fathers in the city of David and the land had peace for 10 years
Asa	2 Chr 16:13-14 – This is the most elaborate funerary story of a Judean king; Asa had carved out for himself a tomb in the city of David. This premeditated action may have served to remind the audience that burial was important enough to make significant and expensive preparations prior to one's death. Asa was buried with spices and perfumes (reminiscent of Egyptian embalming?) and a great fire was burned for him. It is implied that Asa's burial was honorable even though he died of a horrible disease caused by YHWH.
Jehoshaphat	2 Chr 21:1 – Jehoshaphat's burial is described quite simply; he is buried with his fathers in the city of David.
Jehoram	2 Chr 21:19-20 – Jehoram, like Asa, dies a painful death at the hand of YHWH, and, like Asa, a fire is mentioned, but Jehoram is denied this honor. Moreover, the narrator points out that he died with the regret of no one and that, although he was buried in the city of David, he was not buried in the necropolis.
Ahaziah	2 Chr 22:9 – The death of Ahaziah is perhaps the most "embarrassing" account of a Judean king's death. Ahaziah dies at the hands of Jehu, son of Nimshi, who is described as being anointed by YHWH (22:7) to cut off the house of Ahab. Of course, any audience would likely have known something about the legendary Jehu, the northern *prophet cum king* who overthrew the house of Ahab. That Ahaziah dies at the hands of such an individual ties him for all eternity to the wicked northern kingdom. Moreover, although Jehu and his ilk do have the "decency" to at least bury Ahaziah (and this only out of honor for the "righteous" Jehoshaphat), the narrator is sure to leave the burial location nondescript enough to know that he was not buried in Jerusalem (and most likely in Jezreel).
Athaliah	2 Chr 23:15 – Athaliah is executed at the Horse Gate. The narrator conspicuously denies her a funerary description, perhaps as a rhetorical device demonstrating her illegitimacy as monarch (even though she somehow managed to reign unchallenged for six years).
Jehoiada (non-king)	2 Chr 24:15-16 – Jehoiada's funerary description is comprised of four honors: 1) he is described as having reached a ripe old age; 2) he is described as having lived an exceptionally long time at 130 years; 3) he is described as having been buried in the city of David among the kings (almost as a king himself); and 4) the burial is so unusual that the narrator must again praise Jehoiada in order to explain why he was buried in the royal tombs; he had "done well" "in Israel" with God and "his house".
Joash	2 Chr 24:25 – Joash is murdered by his own servants "because of the blood of the son of Jehoiada the priest."

	Moreoever, he is dishonored by not being buried in "the tombs of the kings," though he is buried in the city of David.
Amaziah	2 Chr 25:27-28 – Murdered in Lachish by non-descript individuals (וימיתהו) from Jerusalem. The corpse was brought to the "city of Judah" and buried with Amaziah's fathers.
Uzziah	2 Chr 26:23 – Uzziah was stricken with leprosy because of his hubris at the Temple (26:16). When he died, it appears that, because of his disease and its impurity, he was not buried "exactly" with his fathers but "in the field of the grave which belonged to the kings."
Jotham	2 Chr 27:9 – Jotham appears to have been a pious king even though "the people" were corrupt. He was buried in the city of David; however, we are not told that he was buried either "with his fathers" or "in the tombs of the kings."
Ahaz	2 Chr 28:27 – Ahaz was buried in Jerusalem but not in the "tombs of the kings of Israel."
Hezekiah	2 Chr 32:33 – Hezekiah is buried with his fathers in the "upper section of the tombs of the sons of David." The description of the burial being במעלה "in the upper section" suggests all the more honor for Hezekiah. Moreover, "all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem honored him at his death."
Manasseh	2 Chr 33:20 – Manasseh is buried "in his own house," presumably because, even though he tried to make amends for his apostasy, he had "gone too far" during his life to be honored in death.
Amon	2 Chr 33:24 – Amon is described as multiplying his father's apostasy without repentance. He is murdered by his servants in his own house and denied any funerary description.
Josiah	2 Chr 35:24-25 – Josiah is "buried in the tombs of his fathers" and "all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah." In addition, the prophet Jeremiah is described as composing a קונן "lament" for Josiah which gave rise to a חק "ordinance" that male and female singers would sing his praises ever after. This funerary description is probably the highest tribute to any of the Davidic kings in the monarchy.
Joahaz	2 Chr 36:4 – Joahaz' death is not described; rather, his deportation to Egypt by Pharaoh Neco is the last description given of his short (3 month) reign.
Eliakim/Jehoiakim	2 Chr 36:6 – Jehoiakim's demise is described by his deportation to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar.
Jehoiachin	2 Chr 36:10 – The child-king is also deported to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar.
Zedekiah	No funerary description or other description of his demise is given, perhaps because of the culmination of apostasy which had led to exile; no more dishonorable description could have been assigned to a political leader of Judah.

Based on the above, it may be seen that funerary descriptions use a number of devices with which to dis/honor major political leaders including age at death, regnal summary, place of burial, details of burial description and exile from Judah. Jehoiada is clearly praised in royal terms for his actions by the description of his long and full life as well as his burial within the necropolis of the Davidic kings. For the Chr's readers, the conclusion could be made that Jehoiada was being described as nothing less than a priest-king who might be compared to figures from the past (perhaps Abraham, Melchizedek or Moses) or to the most esteemed priests from post-exilic traditions of the Chr's readers' own day such as Ezra.[272] Second, the Chr seems to draw a contrast between Jehoiada's honorific burial and Joash's disgraceful burial לא קברהו בקברות המלכים "but they did not bury him in the tombs of the kings" like Jehoiada.[273] Within just a few verses, the monarch's very death is blamed on the fact that ולא זכר יואש המלך החסד אשר עשה יהוידע אביו עמו "Joash the king did not remember the kindness (Zechariah's father) Jehoiada did to him" (v. 22) and that התקשרו עליו עבדיו בדמי בני יהוידע הכהן ויהרגהו על מטתו "his servants conspired against him because of the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest, and murdered him on his bed" (v. 25).[274]

The Ironic Reversal of Yahwism Following Jehoiada's Death: 2 Chr 24:17-22[275]

By this point, the Chr's readership was likely expecting Joash to fall from the period of grace extended to him by the life of the pious Jehoiada.[276] What it might not have expected is the utter lack of character the monarch displays as soon as he rules without the help of Jehoiada; in fact, the שרי יהודה "officials of Judah" begin to overshadow the monarch in a negative way much the same way as Jehoiada had overshadowed Joash's reign in a positive way. Williamson notes that these "princes of

---

[272] Contra Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 322, who argues that "there is no suggestion that he is hereby favouring the tendency in the post-exilic period to merge the roles of king and high priest."

[273] Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 847.

[274] The plural בני "sons" is curious because the readers are only apprised of the murder of Zechariah.

[275] The theological reason for the Chr's addition (vv. 17-22) to his *Vorlage* is that the Dtr's account left the Chr wondering how YHWH could have let Joash be attacked by the Arameans for no explicit reason. This *Tendenz* of the Chr is well-known and need not be further mentioned here; see e.g., Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 323 and Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 848.

[276] Contra Allen, "1 and 2 Chronicles," 580, who argues that "the rest of Joash's reign takes a shockingly different turn." It seems more likely that although the latter half of Joash's reign is a polar opposite of the former half, the most cursory reading of the text would have caused an expectation of the downward turn *sans* the super-priest.

Judah" have been negatively described in 2 Chr 12:5, perhaps alerting the reader that whatever followed from such discussion was bound to be negative.[277] One might also add the negative description from 2 Chr 22:8 where the officials of Judah are slain during Jehu's purge of everyone connected in any way with the house of Ahab. Since Joash decides to meet with these scoundrels at all, what emerges is an image of Joash as a spineless puppet ruler who was, perhaps, better removed from the throne given him by Jehoiada.[278] The civic leaders וישתחוו "bowed down" before Joash who שמע "obeyed" them without hesitation.

The apparent result of the meeting is a catastrophic reversal of the good done by Jehoiada (and Joash). Several successive terms describe the brazen wickedness caused by the *political* leadership of Judah; it is important to consider that the priesthood (including the Levitical staff) is not held liable at this point by the Chr.[279] First and perhaps most important to the Chr's readers was that the monarch and the princes had יעזבו "abandoned" YHWH.[280] The severity of this term has been described in Schaefer's dissertation on the seeking/abandoning paradigm in Chronicles. He observes:

> In the statement, "If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will cast you off for ever," one can see not only the positive element of "seeking" God, but the negative element of "forsaking" God as well. The verb translated "to forsake" is עזב, which is used by the Chronicler fifteen times to mean "to forsake God." In only four instances are there parallels in Samuel-

---

[277] Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 323; the context in 12:5 is that the princes of Judah, along with Rehoboam, had fled to Jerusalem for fear of Shishak, whom YHWH had chosen to execute judgment on Judah for abandoning YHWH.

[278] As Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 849, observes, Joash's second reign fully parallels the first; the difference between the two reigns has little to do with the monarch himself. The difference lies in who was influencing Joash during each reign. During the "good" reign, Joash was guided by Jehoiada (and by implication, YHWH); during the bad reign, Joash was guided by the political leaders of Judah (and by implication, *not* YHWH).

[279] I would argue that the Temple staff of YHWH is held blameless throughout the entire narrative, even during Joash's so-called "criticism" of Jehoiada because of the enigmatic delay of the collection of the Temple tax. In this instance (vv. 17-19), only Joash and the princes are blamed for the reversal of Yahwism, while Jehoiada's son (who may be associated with the priesthood by birth; cf. v. 20) is the one who attempts to cause Joash and the princes to repent.

[280] Cf. e.g., the use of עזב "forsake" in 2 Chr 7:19, 22; 12:1; 13:10-11; 15:2; 21:10; 28:6; 29:6; 34:25.

Kings. Possibly the Chronicler was indebted to Jeremiah, for that prophet employed the concept of "forsaking" God thirteen times."[281]

עזב then, is a pregnant term implying that when referring to YHWH as the object of abandonment (in this case the DDO is בית יהוה אלהי אבותיהם "the house of YHWH the god of their fathers"), whoever it describes will brusquely fall out of favor with YHWH. That the בית יהוה "house of YHWH" is an object of scorn is itself ironic; Joash was spared death from Athaliah there (22:12); granted his power to rule there (23:3, 6, 11) and the object of Joash's only good deed: the Temple's restoration (24:4-14).[282] V. 18 continues to describe the process of apostasy whereby new gods filled the cultic void caused by the עזב of YHWH: ויעבדו את האשרים ואת העצבים "and they served the Asherim and the idols." While the term "Asherim" is quite common to describe apostasy in Chronicles,[283] the term עצבים is only used elsewhere by the Chr in 1 Chr 10:9. While the literal meaning seems to be "idol" or perhaps "effigy," the term may be understood here as an ironic pun on עזב "forsake"; thus Judah's political leaders עזב YHWH to serve עצבים. The result is that קצף (divine) "wrath"[284] falls on Judah and Jerusalem because of their אשמה "guilt." In terms of the narrative's plot, the results of the transgressions may be understood as immediate.[285]

A number of unnamed prophets are sent, presumably by YHWH, to שוב "cause them to repent/turn back to" YHWH by עוד "testifying" against them. Even on a cursory reading this attempt does not work as the reader is told immediately that ולא האזינו "they would not listen;" the king is not singled out. However, to the careful reader, v. 19 emerges as another ironic jab specifically directed towards Joash. The verbal form of the root עוד is used by the Chr only in this verse. It seems that the Chr is drawing an ironic contrast with the nominal form of the root in 23:11 and 24:6. In 23:11, Jehoiada presents Joash with the enigmatic עדות "testimony" as part of the coronation process. While the exact nature of the עדות is unclear, it may have been a copy of some form of Mosaic Law (perhaps something like the covenant mentioned in Deut 17:18) or a written copy of the arrangement between the קהל "assembly" and the young king in 23:3.[286] Whatever its nature, it seems to have laid out royal obligations between the monarch and YHWH. In view of Joash's rejection of the testimony of the unnamed prophets, it is ironic that in 24:6, Joash seems to be incensed that the priestly staff have not carried out *their* obligations arising from את משאת משה עבד יהוה והקהל לישראל לאהל העדות "the levy (that) Moses, the servant of YHWH (fixed upon) the assembly of Israel for the tent of the testimony."[287] Thus, Joash's actions in 24:19 are doubly ironic; he has both forgotten his original obligations to YHWH and the fact that he was annoyed that others had not carried out theirs, yet *he* now rejects the prophets' עוד.

---

[281] Cf. 1 Chr 28:9. Schaefer, "The Significance of Seeking God in the Purpose of the Chronicler," 67. The importance of the term has been regularly noted by scholars; see, e.g., Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 323, who calls the verb עזב "one of the Chronicler's favourites" to describe apostasy (see also his discussion on 246) and Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 192, who calls it "characteristic of the Chronicler's theology of immediate retribution."

[282] Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 848.

[283] The term is used 11x in 2 Chr. 14:2; 15:16; 17:6; 19:3; 24:18; 31:1; 33:3,19; 34:3-4, 7.

[284] Cf. 1 Chr 27:24; 2 Chr 19:2,10; 29:8; 32:25-26.

[285] Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 192-193. See also his essay on the theology of immediate retribution in Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 76-81. Dillard is careful to point out, however, that "sanctions are ordinarily imposed only after a prophet offers hope of escape through repentance and forgiveness;" cf. e.g., the cases of Rehoboam (12:1-12) and Jehoshaphat (17-20). Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that the Chr believed in a theology of immediate "action" rather than "retribution" whether it came in the form of prophetic warning and possible escape *or* wrath.

Prophets and the prophetic narratives in Chronicles have been discussed in detail elsewhere and it is not necessary to duplicate that material here.[288] Van Rooy cites a number of general issues regarding prophets based on prophetic narratives that are unique to the Chr, three of which are relevant here:

---

[286] Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 182.

[287] Outside of 2 Chr 22:10-24:27, the עדות is mentioned by the Chr only twice; both times in the context of royal obligations related to YHWH: once in 1 Chr 29:19, during Solomon's coronation, as a description of the various laws and statutes of YHWH which Solomon was supposed to observe and once in 2 Chr 34:31 during Josiah's reform, where he seems to undertake very similar Yahwistic covenant obligations.

The two verses parallel each other, as Josiah's royal responsibilities to YHWH appear to be compared with Solomon's:

1 Chr 29:19: ולשלמה בני תן לבב שלם לשמור מצותיך עדותיך וחקיך
ולעשות הכל ולבנות הבירה אשר הכינותי

1Chr 29:19 and give to my son Solomon a perfect heart to keep your commandments, your testimonies and your statutes, and to do them all, and to build the temple, for which I have made provision.

2 Chr 34:31: ויעמד המלך על עמדו ויכרת את הברית לפני יהוה ללכת
אחרי יהוה ולשמור את מצותיו ועדותיו וחקיו בכל לבבו
ובכל נפשו לעשות את דברי הברית הכתובים על הספר הזה

2 Chr 34:31 Then the king stood in his place and made a covenant before YHWH to walk after YHWH, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all his heart and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant written in this book.

[288] Many recent scholars like Pancratius C. Beentjes, "Prophets in the Book of Chronicles," in *The Elusive Prophet: The Prophet as a Historical Person, Literary Character and Anonymous Artist: Papers Read at the Eleventh Joint Meeting of the Society for Old Testament Study and Het Oudtestamentisch Werkgezelschap in Nederland en België Held at Soesterberg 2000* (Boston: Brill, 2001), 45-53, have concluded that the prophets in Chronicles are "invented" literary devices that may provide a window into the Chr's theological convictions. Similarly, William M. Schniedewind, "Prophets and Prophecy in the Books of Chronicles," in *The Chronicler as Historian* (ed. Matt Patrick Graham et al.; *JSOTSup 238*; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 204-224, focused on how the Chr "used" prophets as an "historical"

1. They comment on and supply interpretations of events described in Kings, linking events to the king's relation to the Lord;
2. Their words are primarily directed at the king;
3. Their message goes back to a theological view that trust in God results in blessing and mistrust brings judgment.[289]

First, regarding the present text, the prophets supply an interpretation for why the Aramean invasion happened in Judah under Joash.[290] Second, while the words of the prophets in 19-20 appear to be directed at the king and the people, I have argued above that the careful reader may recognize that Joash is singled out as the most culpable. Third, the message of these prophets is that עזב "abandoning" YHWH would result in YHWH's קֶצֶף "wrath." What is important is that the prophets attempt to remind Joash and the princes that Judah is primarily a Yahwistic theocracy; ultimate authority did not lie in the hands of the monarchy but in YHWH who supported it.[291] The net effect of this for the Chr's readers would have been to further diminish the role of the monarchy in the history of Israel while elevating the role of those who authoritatively meted out divine knowledge, whether priest as in the case of Jehoiada or "prophet" as in the case of Zechariah.

In v. 20, the spirit of God descends לבשה "to clothe" Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada.[292] Since many other unnamed prophets had already prophesied against the king and the princes, to specifically name (the otherwise unattested) Zechariah implies

---

vehicle to exhort his own generation. Others like Harry V. Van Rooy, "Prophet and Society in the Persian Period According to Chronicles," in *Second Temple Studies 2: Temple and Community in the Persian Period* (ed. Tamara Cohn Eskenazi and Kent Harold Richards; *JSOTSup 175*; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 163-179, have understood prophets in Chronicles to have been "used" by the Chr to support the ideology of theocracy in Persian Yehud. Finally, there are those who argue that the reliability of each prophet(ic narrative) must be evaluated individually because only the narrator and YHWH may be considered reliable; on these issues, see Yairah Amit, ""The Glory of Israel Does not Deceive or Change His Mind": On the Reliability of Narrator and Speakers in Biblical Narrative," 12 (1992): 201-212.

[289] Van Rooy, "Prophet and Society," 171-172.

[290] The account of the Aramean invasion in 2 Kgs 12:17 begins without explanation.

[291] The Davidic covenant in 1 Chr 17 is rife with examples of YHWH speaking in the first person; YHWH speaks, through Nathan, in the first person 22x. It is made very clear to David via Nathan (as agent of YHWH) that the right to the throne is given by YHWH alone (17:12).

[292] Cf. 1 Chr 12:18; Judg 6:34.

that the Chr wished to continue to underscore the ironic tone of this tragedy. The proper name Zechariah (from the root זכר "remember") begins an inclusio that ends in v. 22, ולא זכר יואש "Joash did not remember."[293] Zechariah stood above the people demonstrating his authority to address them and articulated a terse yet fully developed sermon. Johnstone argues that the sermon consists of four elements which encompass the essentials of the Chr's theology:[294]

> 1. The opening 'messenger formula', 'Thus says the LORD', to authenticate the word (cf. 1 Chron. 17.4);
> 2. A rhetorical question that functions as an accusation, 'Why are you transgressing the commandment of God?' – the basic fault of Israel is the denial of God of his rights;
> 3. The verdict: 'you will not prosper'; 'prosper' is C's key term for the blessings that flow from commitment to God's rights (1 Chron. 22.11);
> 4. The reason: 'if you forsake the LORD, he will forsake you', the use of the key verb as in v. 18, expressed now in terms of sacramental[295] theology. If the duly appointed agents of God forsake him, they by that act invalidate themselves for their role (2 Chron. 15.2).

One might add that mixed within this speech are other elements of irony. The fact that Zechariah questions Joash by asking למה אתם עברים את מצות יהוה "Why do you transgress the commandments of YHWH?" begins the ironic coupling continued in v. 21 when Joash conspires to stone him in the house of YHWH וירגמהו אבן במצות המלך בחצר בית יהוה "and at the command of the king they stoned him to death in the court of the house of YHWH." Even the method of Zechariah's murder may be interpreted as ironic; in Deut 21:18-21, רגם "stoning" is the method of capital punishment commanded by Moses for the בן סורר ומורה "stubborn and rebellious son" who will not listen to his parents. Zechariah, the *obedient* son of Jehoiada, attempted to persuade Joash the *disobedient* "son" of Jehoiada to listen to his speech but he would not (24:19). In fact, in v. 22 a very clever ambiguity indicates that Joash was also a "son" of Jehoiada. He is described as not remembering החסד אשר עשה יהוידע אביו עמו "the kindness which Jehoiada his father did to him." While the "obvious" meaning of the pronouns indicate that the phrase refers to Joash not remembering the kindness done to Joash by Zechariah's father, Jehoiada, grammatically, another interpretive option is that the (ambiguous) 3ms suffixes of אביו "his father" and עמו "to/with him" are understood to refer to Joash, so that the irony continues to be heightened and Joash is understood as the rebellious "son" of Jehoiada. Thus, Joash, the rebellious "son" metes out the "punishment of the rebellious son" that he himself deserves. Moreover, since Joash has abandoned YHWH, he will himself be abandoned twice in rapid narrative succession by YHWH (24:24) and his own servants (24:25).

---

[293] Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 146.
[294] Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 145-146.
[295] What Johnstone has in mind by the term "sacramental" theology is unclear to me.

The irony continues to saturate v. 22;[296] the narrative states that Joash the king ולא זכר "did not remember"[297] the חסד "covenant loyalty" which Jehoiada had shown him as a child; the parties to that covenant had been Jehoiada, the people and the king, with the agreement that all were להיות לעם ליהוה "to be people of YHWH." Thus, Joash had not only forgotten Jehoiada's agreement by which he had become king but had broken his agreement to lead the people as YHWH's people. V. 22 closes with Zechariah's plea, "may YHWH see and seek." The phrase ירא יהוה "may YHWH see" recalls the almost sacrifice of Isaac on Mt. Moriah (Gen 22:14), which Abraham had named יהוה יראה "YHWH will see" and which was where the Temple now stood (2 Chr 3:1). Moreover, YHWH was invoked to ירא יהוה וידרש "see and avenge/seek out" Joash (in vengeance). "[T]hose who do not seek are by that act themselves sought out."[298]

---

[296] It should be mentioned that others, such as Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 850, have argued that Joash is only "mildly" evaluated by the Chr. She claims that Joash's only sin is that of ingratitude and that even Zechariah is indecisive about Joash's fate, leaving it to YHWH's discretion. She also points out that the tradition of stoning here may indicate that Zechariah's intervention was seen as treason. However, given all the present evidence, it seems to me that the primary readership of Chronicles would have (at the very least) had the option to denounce Joash's monarchy strongly on the basis of this pericope, while highlighting and contrasting the "good" of the Yahwistic priesthood and the Temple they served.

[297] Regarding זכר "remember" and its associations with covenant loyalty cf. 1 Chr 16:12, 15; 2 Chr 6:42.

[298] Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 146.

In sum, Zechariah was the son of Jehoiada, the priest who had single-handedly placed Joash on the throne and effectively saved the Davidic monarchy. Zechariah (a priest of YHWH) was הרג "murdered" in the same place where Joash had been preserved during the coup and in the same way Mattan, the priest of Baal had been הרג "murdered".[299] Jehoiada, who had ensured that no bloodshed would take place in the holy Temple, had installed the very king who would now profane the Temple by murdering his son there. Joash's act of קשר "treason" (24:21 the beginning of another inclusio) leads to the murder of Zechariah which eventually leads to Joash being הרג "murdered" via the קשר "conspiracy" of his own servants (24:25) recalling the death of Athaliah (23:13); who, not coincidentally, had cried קשר קשר "Treason, Treason!" right before she was killed, creating a highly sophisticated, tightly woven literary web of ironic treason.

Joash's Punishment Part 1: The Aramean Invasion: 2 Chr 24:23-25[300]

It seems significant that the Chr describes the arrival of the Aramean army as ויהי לתקופת השנה "and it happened at the turn of the year." Most translations view this phrase in terms of some late point in the calendar year; "Now it happened at the turn of the year" (NASB); "At the end of the year" (NRSV); "At the turn of the year" (NJB); "So it happened in the spring of the year" (NKJV). These all seem to miss the dual sense of the Hebrew term תקופה "the circuit," which in its other three occurrences in the Hebrew Bible (Ex 34:22; 1 Sam 1:20; Ps 19:7) carries the sense of "appointed time." In its description of the Feast of Tabernacles in Ex 34:22, the term illustrates the carefully regulated time of the Feast of the Ingathering.[301] In 1 Sam 1:20, תקופה is used to describe how the barren Hannah was remembered by YHWH;

---

[299] Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 192-193; Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 146.

[300] On the division of Joash's punishment see Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 851. See also Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 325 who makes a curious statement regarding the Chr's account of the Aramean invasion. He states that because the only point of convergence between the Kgs and Chr's accounts is the mention of "spoil," and that it does not "serve any positive purpose in the Chronicler's presentation," it must be considered to be from an alternative source. While it is true that the accounts are very different and may not be "reconciled" to our satisfaction, and that there may indeed have been other material used by the Chr, I hope to demonstrate here that the Chr's account of the Aramean invasion was carefully crafted to "serve a positive purpose in the Chr's presentation."

[301] The Feast of Tabernacles was held after the harvest (Deut 16:13; Lev 23:39), on the fifteenth through the twenty second of Nissan, on the seventh month (Sept.-Oct.; Lev 23:34; Num 29:12-38). It

ויהי לתקפות הימים ותהר חנה ותלד בן "It came about in due time, after Hannah had conceived, that she gave birth to a son" (so NASB) who became the prophet Samuel. Thus, Hannah's conception was not depicted as "lucky" because it was appointed by YHWH. Similarly, the Psalmist describes how YHWH's glory is מספרים "declared" and מגיד "proclaimed" (Ps 19:1[2]) via the sun's appointed path תקופה through the sky (Ps 19:6[7]). Thus, the fact that the Arameans came at לתקופת השנה "at the turn of the year" implies that the invasion was not a happenstance; YHWH's hand engendered the military action because of Joash's sin.[302]

The arrival of the Arameans in Judah under Joash is recorded in similar terms to that of the final downfall of Judah to the Babylonians under Zedekiah (2 Chr 36:12-17). Both armies עלה על "go up against" the king of Judah and the reasons given by the Chr are very similar. Both are indicted for their hubris, ignoring and abusing YHWH's prophets and for defiling the Temple.

At any rate, the Chr's account of the invasion works in three phases within the overall שפט "judgment" narrative.[303] The army invaded Judah and Jerusalem (the setting for the account of Joash) and destroyed all the princes. Thus, the Chr holds the princes responsible for their role in inciting Joash to sin and in the abandonment of YHWH's cult (vv. 17-18). The fact that the Arameans plunder the kingdom's שללם "spoil" is a first in the Chr's history of Judah. In every other case of the occurrence of the root שלל "spoil" to this point, (1 Chr 20:2; 26:27; 2 Chr 14:12[13]; 15:11; 20:25) it had been Israel/Judah doing the plundering of foreign nations through YHWH's assistance. Finally, the Arameans abandoned Joash after they had seriously wounded him; an action narratively tied to YHWH's abandonment of Joash (vv. 20, 24) because of Joash's abandonment of YHWH (v. 18).

The sacking of the city by the Arameans is emphasized by the Chr's description כי במצער אנשים באו "for they came with a small number of men." The כי particle is used to emphasize important points in a narrative; in this case, a contrast is drawn

---

followed two other celebrations, the New Year (first day of Nissan) and the Day of Atonement (tenth day of Nissan).

[302] See also Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 193, who argues that תקופה may have been used by the Chr as an indication of immediacy.

[303] Described so by the Chr in v. 24; ואת יואש עשו שפטים "and (the Arameans) executed judgment on Joash."

between the Arameans' underdog force which defeated Judah and Jerusalem and the fact that it had usually been Judah who had the small number of troops compared to their enemies and who would win underdog battles as a result of YHWH's help.[304]

Joash's Punishment Part 2: His Servants' Conspiracy: 2 Chr 24:23-26

Though severely wounded, Joash's life was not taken by the Arameans; ironically, it would be taken from within his own kingdom. התקשרו עליו עבדיו "And they conspired against him, his (own) servants." The acts of conspiracy committed vis-à-vis the Judean throne had come full circle for Joash. He had taken back the throne (via Jehoiada) from the house of Omri, in what Athaliah, there the victim, had twice called a conspiracy (23:13). He had also been party to the conspiracy in the public execution of Zechariah (24:21) and now fell victim to a conspiracy negotiated by his own servants. Such conspiracy was initiated בדמי בני יהוידע הכהן "on account of the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest"[305] and completed when Joash's servants had ויהרגהו על מטתו "murdered him on his bed". The murder of the king is a direct result of the death-knell of Zechariah (24:22) who had been murdered at the command of Joash. Moreover, Joash's life was preserved at the beginning of the narrative by Jehoshabeath בחדר המטות "in the bedroom" of the Temple (22:11-12) while his life was destroyed when he was על מטתו "on his bed."[306] As a final insult to Joash, the Chr recounts a negative burial for Joash ויקברהו בעיר דויד "and they buried him in the city of David ולא קברהו בקברות המלכים "but not in the tombs of the kings." Thus, Joash's final resting place is akin to that of Jehoram "who died to no one's regret" (2 Chr 21:20) and Ahaz (2 Chr 28:27).

Little may be said definitively regarding the names of the servants of Joash who were involved in the royal assassination. According to the Kgs account, the consorts are recorded as "Jozacar the son of Shimeath and Jehozabad the son of Shomer;" according to the Chr, they are "Zabad the son of Shimeath the Ammonitess, and

---

[304] See 2 Chr 13:3-18; 14:8-15; cf. also 2 Chr 20:6.

[305] The reader is not told who was killed other than Zechariah; the LXX has translated υἱοῦ (sing.) for בני (plur.). English translators have equivocated on whether there was one son (e.g., NASB, NIV, NRSV, NJB, NAB) or more (e.g., JPS, NKJV) apparently depending on whether the reading of the LXX was preferred over the MT. Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 148, argues that the plural was used by the Chr "to compound the felony."

[306] Klein, "Joash in Chronicles," 127.

Jehozabad the son of Shimrith the Moabitess." The names Zabad and Jehozabad are derived from the same root זבד, and mean "he has endowed" and "YHWH has endowed" respectively. Since we have seen that the Chr may have punned on the name Zechariah, it is possible that the Chr is taking a final ironic jab at Joash via the names of his assassins. Joash's servants, acting as agents of YHWH, did precisely the opposite of "endowing" Joash with a gift. Joash's servants (now serving YHWH instead of Joash) rather "stole" the monarch's life. The genealogical information the Chr provides shows that the conspirators are both sons of Israel/Judah's common enemies, the Moabites and the Ammonites (cf. 1 Chr 18:11; 2 Chr 20:1, 10, 20, 22-23). For the Chr, this may have served to humiliate (the memory of) Joash as a reminder to his readers of the constant readiness of (foreign) destructive powers to mar Israel, as soon as she turned from YHWH.[307]

Joash's Regnal Summary, Sources and Succession: 2 Chr 24:27

The Joash narrative ends with three common elements. The first is a relatively vague reference to other events in Joash's life; namely ובניו ורב [ירב] המשא עליו ויסוד בית האלהים "(concerning) his sons and the many oracles against him and the reestablishment of the house of God".[308] Second, as regards the above events, the Chr writes הנם כתובים על מדרש ספר המלכים "behold they are written in the 'midrash' (or commentary) of the book of the kings."[309] Many scholars are agreed that the Chr is here using a "citation formula" used by historiographers which serves to bolster the believability of the account as presented by providing his readers with the (perceived) opportunity to double-check the accuracy of the information with a different source.[310] It should be mentioned that one final rhetorical card is being played by the Chr. While many scholars have opined about the meaning of the phrase מדרש ספר המלכים "'midrash' (or commentary) of the book of the kings" few have noted that מדרש "midrash" is derived from one of the Chr's key terms, the root דרש "to seek."[311] Within the Chr's source citation formula, then, may be hidden a message to his careful readers; if you seek (perhaps also "study") the truth found in these sacred writings, you will be blessed like Jehoiada, if you do not seek truth, you will be cursed like Joash. The final element is the "regnal succession formula" where the monarch's son is said to rule in his father's place.[312]

---

[307] Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 148. M. Patrick Graham, "A Connection Proposed Between 2 Chr 24:26 and Ezra 9-10," *ZAW* 97 (1985): 256-258, posits that in addition to being assassinated by "descendants of ignoble origins," by adding the Ammonite and Moabite maternal details, the Chr was disparaging interracial marriage. Graham bases this argument on the assumption that the Chr was using Ezra 9-10 as one source for the Joash narrative. While interesting, Graham's arguments on the Ezra connection are speculative. Graham develops his argument based on two facts: 1) that both texts contain the names of Zabad and Jehozabad (Ezra 10:22-43) and 2) that both are related by references to marriages between foreign women and Jewish (Graham uses the term "Jewish") men. As to the first argument, there appears to be no meaningful connection between the men of the same names in the Chr's narrative and the one in Ezra; as to the second, it is unclear how Graham knows that the husbands were Jewish. Jones, *1 and 2 Kings*, 496, agues that beyond their names, "nothing more is known about the two men." Moreover, it is unclear whether the Shimeath in Kgs is male or female. See also Gray, *I and II Kings*, 534-535, who argues with regards to the historical reliability of the Kgs text, that it is a more "doubtful text" than that of the Chr. Suffice it to say that a lack of historical reliability concerning the details of the assassination of Joash should be acknowledged.

[308] It is possible that המשא עליו could be translated as "the tribute imposed on him" (so NJB, NAB, ASV), indicating that Joash was vassalized under either the Arameans or some unnamed ruler. However, given the fact that the reader is not told anything about Joash as a vassal (other than the plundering of the Arameans) and the context of the multiple prophets (including Zechariah) who tried to admonish Joash, it seems likely that the משא should be understood as "oracle" rather than "tribute," keeping in mind that both are possible.

Conclusions: Historical Texts and Rhetorical Control in Judah

While a host of conclusions might be made based on the above analysis of the text, the following summary will focus on two issues: the "meaning" of the text and the meaning of its composition within the Yehudite priestly class. From a syntagmatic perspective, the narrative's central meaning was a demonstration of the ideology of the ideal priest demonstrated by the figure of Jehoiada. Berquist's comments are instructive:[313]

> During the Persian period, Yehud defined itself increasingly in terms of its temple and the worship that took place there. Without a monarchy functioning as a central unifying symbol, the temple and the religion gained even more importance as a cultural center than it had experienced during Judah's earlier

---

[309] Most scholars warn that the meaning of the term מדרש "midrash" should not be considered too closely related to the later Jewish use of the term midrash; Selman, *2 Chronicles*, 457; Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 854. However, see also Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 193, 109-110.

[310] Cf. 2 Chr 13:22. Simon John De Vries, *1 and 2 Chronicles* (FOTL 11; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 344; Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 17-24, 326. Of course, while the Chr may have had access to sources other than Sam-Kgs, they are no longer extant.

[311] Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 854, mentions the root but accords it no rhetorical significance.

[312] Cf. 1 Chr 19:1; 29:28; 2 Chr 9:31; 12:16; 14:1; etc.

[313] Berquist, *Judaism in Persia's Shadow*, 147.

years. Correspondingly, the priests gained in influence and in control over the society as a whole as the importance of the temple grew.

In general, as a textual composition of the ruling elite, Chronicles "constituted the self-portrait of the dominant elite as they would like to see themselves."[314] Certainly, the Chr's portrayal of Jehoiada fits, and perhaps even exaggerates, this ideology of a ruling priesthood. As a model for all others, Jehoiada exhibited the best abilities of a priest and a king. His concern was always for the cult, whether he was deposing an apostate queen or influencing a young Davidic king. Jehoiada effectively influenced every institution of Judah including the monarchy, the nobility, the military and the people. In Judah's darkest hour, Jehoiada was able to mobilize, unify and implement. Jehoiada was also an interpreter of (ancient) traditions. He reinterpreted laws of Moses and statutes of David to tax the people, rebuild the Temple and provide for the perpetual support of the Temple. As the Chr's primary readership, the Yehudite priestly class would have understood the figure of Jehoiada as the ideal priest.

From a compositional perspective, the Chr's readership would likely have appreciated the complexity of this narrative. The Chr's narrative skill would have implied the necessity of the important interpretive function of his readership. Every inclusio, pun, ambiguity and ironic turn in the story affirmed the need for highly educated interpreters supported by the Temple. As a revision of the story told in 2 Kgs 11, the narrative also implied that interpreters of Chronicles were in control of the history of Israel. Such control affirmed the hegemony of the dominant religious class while naturalizing its position of power.

---

[314] Snyman, "Tis a Vice To Know Him," 98.

Chapter Three: Persuasive-Rhetorical Exegesis Read from the Perspective of a Yehudite Listening Audience

General Assumptions Regarding a Listening Audience

A number of assumptions must be made which will shape the scope of exegesis ("art of persuasion" or classical-rhetorical rhetorical exegesis) if one wishes to reconstruct what a Yehudite audience might have "taken away from" a rhetorical performance of any given passage of the Bible. While a number of these have been mentioned in chapter 1, a brief review of some and expansion of others will help guide the exegetical process. Aristotle articulated most of these audience assumptions in *On Rhetoric* at ca. the same time as the Chr wrote his version of Israelite history. Rodney Duke has reviewed the Aristotle's key insights regarding the interplay between rhetor, text and audience and I will refer to his work regularly.

Samuel-Kings and Chronicles

As mentioned in chapter 1, a crucial departure between classical-rhetorical and other types of historical exegesis is reading Chronicles with regards to Sam-Kgs.[315] Whereas most scholars' commentaries on Chronicles regularly compare/contrast Sam-Kgs with the Chr's text, it must be assumed that an audience listening to a rhetorical performance of a given Chronicles passage *would never have been able to do this.*[316] Moreover, as Duke argues, "Chronicles makes no claim to be an interpretation of or commentary on Samuel-Kings or any other historical record. It presents itself as a valid historical narrative in its own right."[317] Yet at the same time, the Chr seemed to assume that his audience was familiar with other historical Israelite traditions.[318] For example, he makes reference to other written "historical" sources, assumes previous knowledge of details about the unfaithfulness of Saul (1 Chr 10:13)[319] and prophecies of Samuel regarding David are referred to by the Chr (1 Chr 11:3) that are recorded only in Sam-

---

[315] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 36-37.

[316] In spite of the fact that the Sam-Kgs tradtions may have been reasonably well known to the general public in Yehud, the simple fact remains that this largely illiterate group would have relied on a very few elite to orate these stories, thus disallowing a comprehensive textual comparison of Sam-Kgs and Chronicles.

[317] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 36.

[318] Of course, I have questioned above Duke's assumption that a general audience was the Chr's intended/primary audience.

[319] See Roddy Braun, *1 Chronicles* (WBC 14; Waco, TX: Word Books, 1986), 151.

Kgs (1 Sam 16).[320] Thus, it is agreed with Duke that "one of our working assumptions will be that the Chronicler did not expect his audience to make a detailed synoptic comparison of his work to some other work, but he did expect them to have a general familiarity with the traditional material he intended to present."[321]

"Seeking" YHWH as a Paradigm for the Chr's Purpose

While there are many "purposes" of the Chr, it is here agreed with Duke and Schaefer that a primary purpose throughout the Chr's work is the importance of seeking YHWH via the Jerusalem Temple.[322] According to Duke, 1 Chr 10-2 Chr 9 develops a paradigm whereby the early pious kings (excluding Saul) of Israel, David and Solomon are described as ones "who properly sought YHWH by instituting and upholding the official temple cultus."[323] 2 Chr 10-36 then describes and evaluates the history of the Davidic kings based (at least in part) on this paradigm.[324]

Classical-Rhetorical/Persuasive Exegetical Analysis: λόγος, ἔθος, πάθος

Duke argues that the Chr's narrative may be usefully analyzed through Aristotle's rhetorical methodology used during speeches.

λόγος: the Rational Mode of Persuasion

As mentioned in chapter 1, the Chr's "rational" argument is most clearly proffered in the forms of the enthymeme and the example and structured around the principle of "seeking YHWH." In order to more fully evaluate the organization of the Chr's λόγος, a number of other logical structures upon which the rational argument is constructed should be mentioned. There are three types of rhetorical speeches, each with its own "special topics": 1) deliberative/political; 2) ceremonial and 3) judicial.[325]

---

[320] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 37.

[321] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 37.

[322] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 54-74.

[323] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 56-66.

[324] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 66-69.

[325] Much of the following discussion is taken from Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 88-92. For Aristotle's full treatment of each of the three species of rhetoric, including a helpful commentary on "difficult" sections, see also Aristotle and Kennedy, *On Rhetoric*, 52-118 [Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*, 1.9.38].

1. Deliberative/Political Speech: Judging the "Happiness" Derived from Past Events

Duke argues that Chronicles should be categorized primarily as deliberative (or political) rhetoric inasmuch as the Chr sought to retell the story of Israel/Judah in such a way as to counsel the people of Yehud to take a certain course of action in the future, namely, to always seek YHWH via the Temple in Jerusalem.[326] This type of rhetoric is primarily interested in providing "historical" narratives and evaluating them in terms of the amount of "happiness" or "unhappiness" they brought every individual in that society. This type of rhetoric is especially useful for Chronicles because of the "democratic" emphasis on "all the people", "all Israel" and the like throughout the text. Examples of happiness would include peace, wealth and land ownership while unhappiness would include war, poverty and a lack of land.

2. Ceremonial Speech: The Praise or Censure of (Historical) Individuals

According to Duke, ceremonial rhetoric in Chronicles is usually employed in the depiction of Israel/Judah's kings. In our pericope, ceremonial rhetoric seeks to not only evaluate a Davidic king but two unusual figures as well: Judah's only "queen" and a priest who acts like a king. Duke cites five methods of ceremonial discourse:[327]

1. Show that a person is the first, only or almost only one to do something;
2. Show that a person has done something better than anyone else, based on the common assumption that superiority demonstrates excellence;
3. Show that a person has often achieved the same success in order to demonstrate that s/he was not just fortunate in one instance.
4. Where possible, highlight the difficult circumstances under which a person accomplishes his/her feat, based on the assumption that the more adversity one overcomes, the more credit s/he deserves.
5. Compare a person to other famous people, based on the assumption that one's praise (or depreciation) is magnified if s/he has equalled or surpassed other great people.

---

[326] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 88. In my estimation Duke unnecessarily underemphasizes the importance of ceremonial and judicial rhetoric, as I will argue below.

[327] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 90-91.

3. Judicial Speech: Evaluating the Justice and/or Injustice of the Past

After defining injustice, Aristotle described three subjects necessary to argue about the past in/justice: the motives of wrongdoing, the conditions under which one commits wrongs and the kinds of persons who are wronged.[328] It is unclear to me why Duke essentially dismisses this species of rhetoric: "These topics play little part in Chronicles. The Chronicler was much more interested in the event of violating divine laws than in the motivation behind the action." In my estimation, at least for the Athaliah/Joash/Jehoiada narrative, the Chr went to great lengths to describe the motives and conditions of certain political acts and describing the people who benefited or were harmed.

ἔθος: the Ethical Mode of Persuasion

Aristotle's *ethos* may be characterized as an attempt to persuade a general audience to think a rhetor credible. According to Aristotle, "...we believe fair-minded people to a greater extent and more quickly [than we do others] on all subjects in general and completely so in cases where there is not exact knowledge but room for doubt. And this should result from the speech, not from a previous opinion that the speaker is a certain kind of person..."[329] Because we know nothing extrinsically about the Chr and have only his "speech(es)", this rhetorical method is helpful in evaluating the way an ancient audience would have accepted (or rejected) a rhetorical performance of a given passage in Chronicles. Duke argues that Yehudite audiences would likely have thought the Chr's texts to be credible based on three observations.[330] First, the Chr did not contradict important Israelite traditions from Sam-Kgs, though there are some changes to details; rather, he reinterpreted them in a new historical context. More specifically, when the Chr discussed the Temple cult, he did so in a manner that an ancient audience would likely have respected, based on similarities to these older traditions. Second, the bulk of Chronicles that is "new" material is made up primarily of "external proofs."[331] In other words, the Chronicler was not primarily evaluating history by his own opinion. He strategically placed external sources, genealogical material and authoritative "voices" (e.g., speech material from prophets, kings and YHWH) to support his argument. Third, the Chr's narrative is authoritative in tone. It speaks with an omniscient, third-person voice which remains largely unobtrusive, while allowing for brief evaluative commentary. The Chr does not call excessive attention to himself and altogether avoids narrating in the first-person.

---

[328] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 91.
[329] Aristotle and Kennedy, *On Rhetoric*, 38.
[330] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 137.
[331] Of course, to what extent these were "real" external sources is impossible to say.

πάθος: the Emotional Mode of Persusasion

The third of the three πίστεις is the part of the rhetor's speech that moves the audience emotionally. According to Duke, as regards the Chr's narratives, emotional appeal occurs via the portrayal of historical figures. For example, David and Solomon exhibited certain characteristics that the Chr would like his audience to emulate; accordingly, these characters are described in heroic terms. "They are ancestors of whom one should be proud…The proper cultic attitudes and actions of the 'good' kings resulted in blessing; improper ones resulted in cursing. Such behavior set into motion a clearly defined principle operative in history, the recognition of which should evoke either anxiety or confidence. One course produced the good things of life which one desired; the other course produced the things one feared."[332]

In sum, the following classical-rhetorical exegetical component will demonstrate sensitivity to the historical setting of an ancient Yehudite listening audience, its abilities to analyze audible information (based on Aristotelian structures) and the extent to which the audience may have been familiar with other historical traditions. The primary (though, not only) model for historical evaluation of various figures will involve the model of "seeking" YHWH.

2 Chr 22:10

The narrative opens with Athaliah attempting to consolidate her power on the Judean throne upon the death of her son, Ahaziah. Athaliah's familial identification is unclear: She could have been Omri's natural or adopted daughter, his daughter-in-law, his grandchild or a female member of the royal house.[333] Up to this point, Athaliah has been presented as a stereotypical villain; a female no less. She is referred to anonymously as the wife of Jehoram and the daughter of Ahab in 2 Chr 21:6. In 2 Chr

---

[332] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 147.

[333] W. Boyd Barrick, "Another Shaking of Jehoshaphat's Family Tree: Jehoram and Ahaziah Once Again," *VT* 51 (2001): 9-25; see also Hannelis Schulte, "The End of the Omride Dynasty: Social-Ethical Observations on the Subject of Power and Violence," *Semeia* 66 (1994): 133-148.

22:2, Athaliah is named and presented as the mother of king Ahaziah and immediately thereafter as the בת עמרי "daughter of Omri," rooting her character firmly within the evil house of Omri and its dynasty (within the stereotypical wickedness of the northern kingdom; cf. 2 Chr 10:19).[334] In 2 Chr 21:6, Athaliah is named as Ahab's daughter and Jehoram's wife. Jehoram is first accused of walking in the way of the kings of Israel (i.e., he was generally wicked) and then is accused of walking in the way of the house of Ahab (i.e., he was as wicked as the most wicked of the kings of the northern kingdom) so that *quite naturally* ויעש הרע בעיני יהוה "he did (the) evil in the eyes of YHWH."[335] What was the motivation for this behavior? כי בת אחאב היתה לו אשה "Because the daughter of Ahab was his wife." The particle כי carries the rhetorical force of the argument, demonstrating the wicked motivation of Jehoram as springing from his marital connection to the house of Ahab.[336] Jehoram's rule was thus marked by fratricide (2 Chr 21:4), military failures (2 Chr 21:8-10, 17), apostasy (2 Chr 21:11), prophetic judgment (by no less than Elijah 2 Chr 21:12-15) and a most shameful death; 1) he was נגף (divinely) "struck" by a revolting bowel disease; 2) he was denied an aromatic funeral pyre (cf. Asa's honorable death in 2 Chr 16:14);[337] and 3) although he was buried in the royal city he was not buried in the royal tombs (2 Chr 21:20).[338] Thus, Jehoram's downfall and destruction is due, in no small part to his association with Israel in general and with the בת אחאב/בת עמרי "daughter of Ahab/daughter of Omri" the Omride dynasty's specifically.

---

[334] On the issues surrounding the Chr's ideology of the house of Omri/Ahab, see also Ehud Ben Zvi, *The House of Omri/Ahab in Chronicles* - to be published in a book on the House of Omri/Ahab edited by L. L. Grabbe 2004, 1-18.

[335] See also 2 Chr 21:13.

[336] On the rhetorical usages of the particle כי see James Muilenburg, "The Linguistic and Rhetorical Usages of the Particle ky in the Old Testament," *HUCA* 32 (1961): 135-160; see also Bruce K. Waltke and Michael Patrick O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 640-641.

[337] A public audience may have also been familiar with some form of Jer 34:5.

[338] In the Hebrew Bible in general and in Chronicles in particular, the description of improper burial rites (usually reserved for important figures) demonstrates the acceptance or rejection of the person by the public, according to the view of the author/editor of a text. Cf. the denial of proper burial for Jehoram, Ahaziah, Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Ahaz, and Amon (2 Chr 21:19-20; 22:9; 24:25; 25:28; 26:23; 28:27). See also e.g. 1 Kgs 13:22 and Jer 22:19. For an extensive treatment of the issues surrounding ancient Jerusalemite funerary practices, see the four part series: L Y. Rahmani, "Ancient Jerusalem's Funerary Customs and Tombs: Part 1," *BA* 44 (1981): 171-177; L Y. Rahmani, "Ancient Jerusalem's Funerary Customs and Tombs: Part 2," *BA* 44 (1981): 229-235; L Y. Rahmani, "Ancient Jerusalem's Funerary Customs and Tombs: Part 3," *BA* 45 (1982): 109-119; L Y. Rahmani, "Ancient Jerusalem's Funerary Customs and Tombs: Part 4," *BA* 45 (1982): 43-53.

Jehoram's youngest son Ahaziah succeeds him but is left dangerously connected to Israel because of his notorious mother. In 2 Chr 22:2-3, Athaliah's connection to the house of Omri is repeated (עתליהו בת עמרי "Athaliah daughter of Omri") and connected by the particle גם "moreover/indeed." In addition to the particle's function as a clausal coordinator, it appears to have an emphatic effect and may be translated as "indeed," especially as it is quickly followed by the particle כי.[339] Thus, a major part of the blame for the dreadful rule of Ahaziah is placed squarely on the shoulders of the monarch's mother insofar as she is associated with the Omride dynasty. 2 Chr 22:3 may be translated as, "גם *Indeed*, he walked in the ways of the house of Ahab כי *because* his mother was his advisor to do evil." The net effect of the rhetoric is to show that Ahaziah had little chance to do right because of his mother Athaliah. Moreover, his connection to the northern kingdom goes as far as a military coalition with Jehoram to fight against Hazael king of Aram (2 Chr 22:6).[340] In vv. 7-9 following, Ahaziah meets his demise, while hiding in Samaria, at the hands of the infamous regicidal Jehu, אשר משחו יהוה להכרית את בית אחאב "who was anointed by YHWH to cut off the house of Ahab." Thus, Athaliah's character is embedded into a broad milieu of corruption, fratricide, regicide, disease and apostasy. Within this context, it would have been unsurprising to a listening audience that Athaliah rose up and began to murder the royal seed of the house of Judah in an effort to seize power in Jerusalem.[341]

What might have been shocking is the desperate nature of the threat to the house of David/Judah. Narratological tension is created by the possibility that if Athaliah was able to kill off all the royal children from the house of David, the Davidic covenant would have been broken and YHWH could not be trusted. In fact, 2 Chr 22:10 argues that she succeeded: ותדבר את כל זרע הממלכה לבית יהודה "(she rose) and destroyed all the royal offspring of the house of Judah." One can almost imagine the gasps in the audience: had Athaliah in fact succeeded? Of course, according to the

---

[339] Waltke and O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 662-663.

[340] The northern and southern kingdoms may have been united briefly at this time under Ahaziah. On this issue see Barrick, "Jehoshaphat's Family Tree," 9-24.

[341] It is interesting, however, that in the Dtr., other usurpers are often described as rather bloodthirsty (cf. David (2 Sam 11:14-21; 1 Kgs 2:5-9); Solomon (1 Kgs 2:25); Baasha (1 Kgs 15:29) and the extended version of Jehu's slaughter of the house of Ahab). These stories are either greatly condensed or omitted altogether in the Chr's account, perhaps serving to heighten the egregious nature of Athaliah's actions. See Elna K. Solvang, *A Woman's Place is in the House: Royal Women of Judah and their Involvement in the House of David* (eds. David Clines and P. R. Davies; JSOTSup 349; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 162-163 for a view of Athaliah's usurpation in the Dtr history.

Chr, she had not - for she was thwarted herself by a woman, connected not to royal but (the more significant) cultic power, who possessed a different kind of courage...

2 Chr 22:11

As the "antidote" to Athaliah's designs, Jehoshabeath was a female hero of the Davidic dynasty, in both genealogical and marital terms; she is Jehoram's daughter, Ahaziah's sister and wife of Jehoiada the priest. It is uncertain that Athaliah was her mother, although this cannot be ruled out as Athaliah was married to Jehoram and the mother of Ahaziah. This extensive description establishes her within the same familial milieu as Athaliah and functions rhetorically to "prove" that people's characters are not determined solely by the fate into which they are born; it is implied that Jehoshabeath chose to live righteously as the wife of a high priest.[342] Her "choice" is evidenced in the hiding of her nephew, Joash, the last of the house of David, (appropriately enough) in a bedroom in the house of God. Redford argues that a common ANE literary motif used of gods and (usually important) humans is the story of the hero endangered at infancy.[343]

It might be instructive to point out that so far, the narrative's characters have been allied by military coalition, marriage or direct lineage to the evil northern kingdom. Jehoshabeath broke this downward spiral, seemingly by her marriage to Jehoiada.[344] If marriage can be understood as an alliance, the implied enthymeme would look something like this:

The one who marries/allies him/herself with YHWH is good.

---

[342] Although it is not entirely explicit, it seems that Jehoiada is the high priest because of both his actions and his description in 2 Chr 24:6.

[343] Redford, "Exposed Child," 211; three archetypes are common: 1) the child is exposed because of shame of the circumstances of his birth; 2) the current ruler, at the instigation of an oracle or simply because the child is a threat, tries to kill the child who is fated to supplant him/her; 3) a general massacre (e.g. genocide) endangers the life of the child. The Joash story belongs to the second category as Athaliah attempts to rid herself of any potential competition. Redford argues that this motif suggests a milieu where dynasty and lineage are of the utmost importance. Clearly, within the Chr's story of the interaction between the Omride dynasty and the house of Judah, this rings true; here the house of David is being mortally threatened.

On the significance of the synonyms סתר and חבא "to hide" and their use regarding YHWH and humans, see Samuel E. Balentine, "A Description of the Semantic Field of Hebrew Words for "Hide"," *VT* 30 (1980): 137-153.

[344] On alliances as "topos" in Chronicles, see Gary N. Knoppers, ""Yhwh Is Not with Israel": Alliances as a Topos in Chronicles," *CBQ* 58 (1996): 601-626. Knoppers argues on p. 602 that marriage is one of the archetypical types of alliance and that on p. 626 that, in the post-exilic period, both Chr and Ezra-Nehemiah stressed that Yehud should not rely on outside nations (including Israel) and should, rather, rely solely on YHWH. Jehoshabeath's genealogy "allied" her to the north and to evil but her marriage to Jehoiada "allied" her to the Temple and to YHWH. This may illustrate Jehoshabeath's free choice in the Chr's worldview of good and evil.

Jehoshabeath married Jehoiada, the high priest of YHWH.
Jehoshabeath is good.

2 Chr 22:12

The covert operation to save the young prince is described as having been successful as Joash was successfully hidden בבית האלהים "in the house of God." This could bring to the mind of an audience a number of issues, not the least of which would have been the fact that Athaliah did not have complete control over Jerusalem or at least the Temple. Surely she should have known about *all* the royal family, including even the youngest of the children of Ahaziah.[345] Thus, if she did know about Joash and his aides, she either could do nothing to harm him in the Temple or she felt somehow unthreatened having a young child of the house of David hiding in the house of God. While this point remains to be resolved, given Redford's comments on this ANE folk-motif, it seems unlikely that the latter would have been true and the audience would likely be left with the impression that the Temple itself played a significant role in the protection of the king – either because it was so big that all its rooms could not be accounted for (which would fit the fantastic description of the building of the Temple in 1 Chr) or that the power of YHWH was somehow able to keep Athaliah at bay (which would fit the "seeking" motif of the Chr; i.e., Jehoshabeath and Jehoiada "sought" YHWH's protection within the Temple and found it for the duration of six years).

2 Chr 23:1

It is likely that public audiences would have been familiar with the royal and military connotations of the root חזק "strengthen." The root is used so often in both contexts that if portions of Chronicles were read to the public with any sort of regularity, the audience would likely have picked up that Jehoiada was about to involve himself in supra-priestly activities. [346] The שרי המאות "captains of hundreds" that Jehoiada takes as leaders for the coup d'etat are not explicitly described as Levites,[347] though their actions appear to be consistent with Levitical requirements (insofar as they appear to be included in כל הקהל "all the assembly" in 2 Chr 23:3 who make a covenant with the king while in the house of God). The term appears to refer to a generic sort of military leadership; it is used in 1 Chr 13:2 when David delivered his speech prior to his first attempt to bring the ark to Jerusalem and in 1 Chr 28:1 at David's assembly when he confirms Solomon as his successor and builder of the Temple.

---

[345] It should be noted that Jehu, acting as agent of YHWH, was able to find Ahaziah even though he was מתחבא "hiding" in Samaria (חבא is used of Joash hiding in the Temple in 22:12). According to these two narratives, the act of hiding itself was insignificant; the relationship to YHWH of the one "seeking" and the one being sought was significant.

[346] חזק is most often used in military contexts of military leaders (e.g., 1 Chr 19:12-13; 26:27; 2 Chr 8:3; 11:11-12; 13:7-8) and/or in contexts of the establishment of a new king (e.g., 1 Chr 11:10; 28:7; 2 Chr 1:1; 11:17; 12:13; 13:21; 17:1; 21:4).

Once the leaders are assembled, Jehoiada enters into a ברית "covenant" with them to ratify their support of his plan to depose the queen (the covenant ceremony seems to be repeated three times; here and in vv. 3 and 16). The repetition of the covenant three times may have had symbolic significance that an ancient audience could have picked up on; if they did not, at least the repetition would have made it clear that a "new deal" was being made by means of the coup, spearheaded by Jehoiada, the super-priest.

2 Chr 23:2

Having assembled appropriate leadership for the coup and having come to some sort of agreement as to the logistical details, Jehoiada sends out the commanders throughout Judah to gather Levites and important tribal leaders ראשי האבות לישראל "heads of the fathers of Israel" from all the cities of Judah to Jerusalem for the overthrow of the queen.[348] The rhetorical effect of the beginning of Jehoiada's campaign is to demonstrate the unity of Israel/Judah within all aspects of its leadership under Jehoiada: religious, royal, military and political/tribal. It is significant that, according to the story, no one challenged Jehoiada in his mission nor did anyone alert Athaliah that her power was about to be usurped.

The actions taken by Jehoiada must have been rather covert, considering this seems to be something of a national effort, for Athaliah seems entirely unaware of her impending demise. The effect of this on an audience would serve to contrast the cunning of Jehoiada the priest and the ignorance of Athaliah the queen, perhaps even

---

[347] So Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 315. Williamson argues that because all the names *ad loc* can be found in lists of priests and Levites elsewhere, that these commanders should be considered Levites. Japhet, *I and II Chronicles*, 830, argues that the names are "much too common" to serve as the basis for any such identification.

[348] On the issues surrounding the ideology of "Israel" in Chr and other postexilic texts, see Ben Zvi, "Inclusion in and Exclusion from Israel," 95-149.

"proving" that YHWH was supporting Jehoiada (might one go as far as to suggest that YHWH was hiding Jehoiada's actions as Jehoiada had hid Joash in the Temple?) and not supporting Athaliah. Moreover, the fact that Jehoiada is able to garner support from both religious and political leaders by "doing a circuit"[349] throughout Judah, without resistance, shows that "everyone" agreed with the coup; apparently no one supported Athaliah even though she was able to reign uncontested for six years.

2 Chr 23:3

Upon Jehoiada gathering the קהל "assembly" together, including the captains of the hundreds (military leaders), the heads of the fathers of Israel (political leaders) and the Levites (religious leaders), a ברית "covenant" is cut with the child-king somewhere within the house of God.[350] It is important to note that Jehoiada has done a remarkable job in his preparation; he has procured the support of every important leadership group in Judah while under what appears to be divine "ordination."

Next, Jehoiada confirms the deity's commitment to the Davidic dynasty in his speech to the assembly; "Behold, the king's son shall reign, as YHWH has spoken concerning the sons of David." Thus he reminds the assembly of the covenant between YHWH and David (and the Davidic dynasty) in 1 Chr 17; 2 Chr 6:10-11 and 13:5. With the support of YHWH, the disposition of the evil queen and the enthronement of the (rightful) Davidic king were all but completed. At the very least, the story demonstrates that, in the absence of an enthroned Davidic king, a priest who is supported by YHWH could perform the most difficult tasks in the most precarious situations – at least as well as any Davidic king had ever done. This was a particularly important theme for both the public and the elite in Achaemenid Yehud in the absence of a Davidic monarch.

---

[349] According to *HALOT*, סבב here seems to imply totality: a meticulous, systematic gathering of the leaders. Cf. 1Sam 7:16; Hab 2:16; Is 23:16; Song 3:2; 5:7; Qoh 12:5; 2 Chr 17:9.

[350] The similarity of actions between Jehoiada and the קהל here and David and the קהל in 1 Chr 11:3 may be significant. Even though Jehoiada is placing Joash on the throne, the authority that he displays here in doing so makes him look remarkably *like* a king, even if he is not *actually* one. Moreover, the fact that Jehoiada does not seek to take the throne himself, though it appears that he would be eminently capable of doing so (at least while Joash was a juvenile), implies his respect for the "special" relationship between YHWH and the Davidic dynasty which ultimately presents his character in the best possible terms.

2 Chr 23:4-5

The שערי הספים "gatekeepers" appear to be a combination of priestly and Levitical paramilitary troops who were able to provide security to the Temple and the inner-city in Jerusalem. According to the Chr, this group had to be involved in the imminent coup due to purity laws that would prohibit non-Temple staff from entering the Temple (2 Chr 23:6). Deployed by Jehoiada to strategic posts at the palace, the gate of the foundation and other unnamed gates in the immediate area, the gatekeepers were able to move freely[351] almost anywhere within the holy inner city of Jerusalem.[352] It might be mentioned that because Jehoiada deploys priests and Levites in a para-military role within the context of preserving the Davidic covenant further suggests the ideology of a holy war (at least a holy coup) against an unholy adversary, once again demonstrating that YHWH will be on the side of the holy; assuring that "good" will be victorious over "evil." Moreover, Jehoiada appears at this critical planning point in the coup to be much more than just a priest; he is depicted as a capable military commander, as able as any in Judah.

In addition to YHWH, Jehoiada and the priestly/Levitical security force, the Chr is careful to note that כל העם "all the people" are present in the courts of the Temple as both supporters and witnesses to the impending disposition of the queen. That is to say that responsibility for the coup is to be shared between the ruling elite and the general public who may, under the direction of the elite, play an important role in governmental affairs. Orated publicly in Achaemenid Yehud, this type of rhetoric could have served two important functions: 1) it would have bolstered the religious elite's claim to capable leadership in spite of the absence of a Davidic monarch and 2) it would have included the general public as supportive of the Temple's religious elite in critical governmental affairs.

---

[351] It is likely that an ancient Yehudite audience would have been familiar with some form of the tradition of Num 3:5-10, the "choosing" of the Levites as keepers of the tabernacle and the warning, upon pain of death, that the זור "layperson" not enter or even approach the משכן "tabernacle." The Jerusalem Temple had, by the time of the Chr, been described as being an extension of the tabernacle because of the transfer of the ark, making the laws concerning it also enforceable at the Temple in Jerusalem.

[352] Wright, "Guarding the Gates," 73-74. See also the responsibility of the gatekeepers in 1 Chr 26:1-9. In addition to their role as a security force, according to Wright, this group also had three other responsibilities: 1) political administration; 2) administration of Temple taxes and 3) care of the Temple and its cultic objects.

2 Chr 23:6

During this most tumultuous of times, Jehoiada is depicted as keeping the משמרת "charge" of YHWH and ordering all others to do the same. He remains focused not only on his dangerous mission to depose the queen, but on guarding the (purity) laws of YHWH, much as the priests/Levites in the story are guarding the gates. This type of discourse encouraged a view of reality that was simultaneously cognizant of the seen and the unseen. The actors in the coup d'etat were directed by Jehoiada to be not only conscious of the physical danger of the operation but of the spiritual danger that ignoring YHWH's laws would bring (which of course could bring immediate physical danger; cf. 1 Chr 13:9-10). Moreover, this discourse, while encouraging cooperation between the religious elite and the general public, serves to reiterate the important distinction of both group's roles. The priests and Levites are described as קדש "holy" and are allowed access to the Temple on that basis, while העם "the people" are reminded that they are not.

2 Chr 23:7

Part of the Levitical force is charged with the personal protection of the child-king as he comes and goes from the house – presumably from one of the rooms of the Temple where he has been hidden. It may be rhetorically significant that the Levites, as human extensions of YHWH's authority, are to completely encircle the young prince. The use of the root נקף "to encircle" together with the adverb סביב "surrounding" would have suggested an image of "air-tight" security.[353] The Levites are ordered to kill anyone who comes inside the Temple.[354] The detail given in these verses suggests that there was some threat to Joash, even though the story implies that Athaliah was unaware of what was happening; the security details encourage the listener of the story to remain focused on the fact that this is a dangerous coup that required precision planning, cooperation between all involved parties and most of all, YHWH's blessing.

---

[353] See also 23:10 below.

[354] Of course, capital punishment for desecrating the Temple would also encourage the Yehudite listener to reflect on the nature of the Temple as the earthly residence of YHWH and the domain of a very distinct קדש "holy" human elite; access to the Temple was controlled, in part, by the threat of death.

2 Chr 23:8

Again, Jehoiada's ability to procure unquestioned obedience is demonstrated. The Levites and "all Judah" act in unison according to all that the priest had צוה "commanded." The structure "order-execution of the order" is reflected elsewhere in formulaic expressions that have been described as "fulfillment formulae": X acts "according to all that Y ordered" (2 Sam 9:11; 21:14; 2 Kgs 11:9; 16:16; Jer 35:8, 10, 18; 36:8; Ruth 3:6; Esth 3:12; 4:17).[355] Jehoiada's power is described here as so complete that if it was accepted as true that ויעשו הלוים וכל יהודה ככל אשר צוה יהוידע הכהן "the Levites and all Judah did according to all that Jehoiada the priest commanded" (note the repetition of כל "all"), the coup was actually over before it had even begun since there was no one but Athaliah herself left to fight for her throne.

2 Chr 23:9

Upon explanation and implementation of the plan for the coup, Jehoiada distributes weaponry, among which are שלט "shield(s)" described as having been king David's. It is interesting to note that in 1 Chr 18:7 certain שלטי הזהב "(small?) golden shields" are described as being brought by servants of Aramean king Hadadezer to Jerusalem and then dedicated to YHWH by David (1 Chr 18:11). It is possible that the Chr is alluding to these mythical weapons which could have been stored in the Temple in Jerusalem (2 Chr 5:1).[356] That the weapons are described as once possessed by legendary King David elevates their power in the story and could surely have evoked an excited reaction in an ancient Yehudite audience, perhaps in a way similar to Joshua's horn, Samson's hair or Goliath's sword. Moreover, the weapons are explicitly connected to the Temple which would suggest the support of YHWH during the wielding of the armaments.

2 Chr 23:10

Jehoiada then arranges כל העם "all the people" around the Temple. The images are established by the merismatic phrase

---

[355] G. Liedke, "צוה," *TLOT*, elec. ed.

[356] The Temple in Chronicles acts as both symbol/storehouse of incredible wealth; cf. e.g., 1 Chron 29:1-9 and 2 Chron 3:4-10; 4:7-8, 20-22.

מכתף הבית הימנית עד כתף הבית השמאלית "from the right/south side of the house to the left/north side of the house" and also by the altar. The description of the surrounding of the king is further supported by the adverb סביב "around." It is important to note that in several cases elsewhere the Chr uses the same term סביב to describe how YHWH gives rest (or creates peace by terrorizing Judah's neighbors so that they did not attack) to other monarchs (1 Chr 22:18; 2 Chr 14:7; 15:15; 17:10; 20:30). Thus, the description of the protection of the Levitical bodyguards has been imbued with something of a transcendent power. The lines are drawn and, under the protection of YHWH, Jehoiada the priest and his ad hoc Levitical/priestly paramilitary force are about to take back what is rightfully theirs – the Davidic throne.

2 Chr 23:11

The fact that the people present Joash with הנזר (*the* crown including the definite article) may further suggest that Athaliah was ruling illegitimately; assuming, of course, that there was a single crown that would have been used by a given Judean monarch. Moreover, if the term נזר suggests Joash's consecration to YHWH, the opposite might also be true; Athaliah is subtly and simultaneously being accused of never having been consecrated to YHWH during her six year reign. This accusation is supported later in 24:7 where Athaliah's "sons" desecrate and loot the Temple.

The nature of the עדות "testimony" is uncertain. According to *HALOT*, the term here refers to some written document that was presented to the king of Judah at his coronation together with the crown (cf. 2 Kgs 11:12 and perhaps Ps 132:12). The document may have been comparable to either the Egyptian *nḫbt* (i.e., the "royal protocol") or it may have been a document containing stipulations of a form of the Davidic covenant (e.g., some written form of 1 Chr 17) which would be binding upon the royal line. The document may also have contained provisions, in some form, of the Sinai covenant (cf. 24:6). At any rate, it is reasonable to assume that העדות "the testimony/statutes" would have been understood by an ancient audience to be some sort of written agreement between YHWH and the king.[357] As such, the terms were controlled and interpreted by those who could read. It is even likely that Joash could not yet read, giving even more power to Jehoiada to ensure that the young monarch would follow the rules.

---

[357] It is possible that the Temple staff and "the people" were also included as parties to such an agreement; Deut 1:1 and 1:3 indicate that Moses was speaking הדברים "the words" given him by YHWH אל כל ישראל "to all Israel" which included monarchs, Temple staff and the public.

2 Chr 23:12

In the world of the narrative, at some point, Athaliah realizes that something is terribly wrong. She hears the voice/sound of the people running after the newly anointed king and praising him. העם "the people" are mentioned twice in the verse, apparently democratizing the coup. Athaliah approaches the house of YHWH and the people who are gathered there, significantly elevating the tension of the scene and creating the distinct possibility of a royal showdown between the king and his grandmother-queen. But there is a problem. Even though the story should climax with Athaliah and Jehoiada/Joash fighting to the death at the Temple, she approaches without support. Symbolically, Jehoiada, the king and the people are in positions of power within the environs of the Temple; Athaliah approaches alone and from without. The coup concludes anticlimactically and is declared a "no-contest" between the holy house of David and the vulgar house of Omri.

2 Chr 23:13

Athaliah's downfall is rhetorically reinforced by alliteration within the phrase עומד על עמודו "standing by his pillar." The king is depicted as being appointed by the people[358] and now stands as firm and unshakable as the pillar beside which he stands.[359] Moreover, the pillar is Joash's; specifically indicated by the 3ms suffix. The pillar is *his* pillar. To an ancient audience, the Temple pillars (probably recalling Jachin and Boaz) would have been important symbols of the divine connection to dynastic power structures. According to Meyers, there were three possible ways to underscore this ideology in the ANE. First, the written word could be used; however, as she points out, writing was expensive and most people were illiterate anyway so this means was used primarily among the elite. Second, oral tradition could be used (this means eludes modern scholarship except where it has been preserved through the written word).[360] Finally, conspicuous iconography could be used;[361] as ornate and conspicuous as the Temple pillars likely were, including their proximity to the palace, the commoner would have had no doubt as to the divine power (brokered by the priesthood) that supported the king.[362] The Temple has been taken by the young king, under the direction of YHWH's servant, Jehoiada. YHWH had simultaneously made his presence with Jehoiada/Joash and his absence from Athaliah felt in the course of the coup.[363] To the Yehudite hearers of this text, certain types of coup d'etat (at least when they involved the restoration of a Davidic monarch) were not only acceptable but supported by YHWH. Moreover, priests like Jehoiada could function successfully as both political and military strategists, while remaining priests; clearly this was an important story to a community that no longer had a Davidic (or any local) monarch but who did have an authoritative priesthood supported by the Temple (and, of course, YHWH).

---

[358] Chr often uses the root עמד with the sense of "appoint" (cf., e.g., 1 Chr 6:31-33; 15:16-17; 16:17; 17:14; 22:2; 23:30; 2 Chr 8:14; 9:8; 11:15; 19:5).

[359] The nominal form of עמד is most often used in Chr in the description of the Temple (cf. 1 Chr. 18:8; 2 Chr. 3:15-17; 4:12-13).

The ותוקע בחצצרות "blowing of the trumpets" by כל עם הארץ "all the people of the land" is also rhetorically charged. Trumpets were typically blown during times of activity that involved communal rather than individual actions/events. As a part of the "commotion," the phrase כל עם הארץ "all the people of the land" is used five times in Chr, three of which describe Jehoiada's coup (the other two occur at the denouement of the story at 2 Chr 23:20, 21). Certainly the entire community is described as being supportive of Jehoiada's plans; this is part of the rhetorical process as the text presents Jehoiada's success, via YHWH's blessing, as absolute.[364] Now entirely bereft of support, Athaliah is isolated and attention is shifted quickly to her expression of anguish. She is described as ותקרע עתליהו את בגדיה "tearing her clothes" in a conspicuous act that conveys total dejection (cf., e.g. Gen 37:29; Ezra 9:3; Is 37:1 and Job 1:20).

At the climax of dramatic tension in the story, the Chr places two words in the mouth of the former queen, קשר קשר "treason, treason." Rhetorically, these two words function to ironically portray the queen as a character who could not sustain her throne because she herself had originally committed treason to achieve her power. An ancient audience would likely have nodded in agreement; treason was indeed the reason for this entire debacle. The Chr silences his villain except for forcing her to concurrently recognize the end of her power and inadvertently admit the reason for its termination. Within this context, it is possible that the word is repeated to indicate the conspiracy that began Athaliah's reign and the conspiracy that ended it, an indication of the resolution of a six year conflict; the most dangerous (and shameful) time in the history of the Davidic monarchy.

---

[360] Any attempts to distinguish between ancient oral tradition and written traditions must be conceded as tenuous.

[361] Cf. also the discussion of the Behistun inscription in a similar iconographic context in Berquist, *Judaism in Persia's Shadow*, 135-137.

[362] Meyers, "Jachin and Boaz," 167-178.

[363] It is quite possible that the עמוד "pillar" carries theophanic connotations described in Israel's construction of their past, especially within the context of being near the entrance of the deity's residence; cf. Ex 33:9-10; Num 12:5; Deut 31:15 and Neh 9:19 (perhaps also Ex 13:22 14:19, 24; Num 14:14).

[364] To be sure, it is historically unlikely that Athaliah would have had no supporters after ruling without incident for 6 years but my concern here is primarily interested in rhetorical/ideological reality rather than historical reality.

2 Chr 23:14

In order to "finish what he started," Jehoiada now acts at a military commander as he יוצא "leads out" the other military leaders in some sort of formation. Athaliah is led out from אל מבית השדרות "within the ranks." Although it is not certain, *HALOT* suggests that this phrase is a reference to the queen being forced to "run the gauntlet" as the soldiers abuse the pitiful character, brought forth from the Temple to the courtyard where the paramilitary and the people anticipate her fate.

The next phrase is terribly ironic. Jehoiada declares that anyone that והבא אחריה "follows" Athaliah (ostensibly anyone who supported her) will be put to death by the sword. Of course, it is inconceivable that anyone would follow her as she runs the gauntlet through a mass of military and public spectators; anyone who would do so would be killed. Apparently, the Chr uses this to "prove" that Athaliah did not actually have any supporters for no one dared to follow the fallen queen. Of course, Athaliah is not killed then and there at the Temple. Jehoiada orders the troops not to kill her on sacred ground. The last sentence illustrates that although Jehoiada was acting as a military commander, he retained his priestly cultic piety; human blood should not be spilled, even a treasonous rebel's blood, in the Temple (cf. 1 Chr 22:8). Thus, the sanctity of the Temple and the order of YHWH's high priest supersede all else, even the lynching of an illegitimate, treasonous queen.

2 Chr 23:15

Thus Athaliah is eventually executed at the Horse Gate of the king's house. It is quite possible that Jezebel was her mother;[365] if so, this association of horses and death (cf. 2 Kgs 9:33) would reflect the Chr's narration of the death of another, related, wicked queen from the house of Omri. If horses were regularly associated with foreign rulers and their inimical power, certainly the irony of the circumstances involving Jezebel and Athaliah's deaths would be both apparent and persuasive. Moreover, it is no accident that there is no mention of the queen's burial; that she is shamed by this conspicuous omission is an indication that the Chr never understood the reign of the queen to be legitimate and that his audience should pay similar contempt to her memory.[366]

2 Chr 23:16

Upon Athaliah's death, a new chapter begins in the story. Jehoiada makes a ברית "covenant" בינו ובין כל העם ובין המלך "between himself, all the people and the king." The first time the word ברית is used by the Chr is in 1 Chr 11:3, after the death of Saul. It is interesting that in that chapter, the coronation is similarly described as being performed as supported by Samuel another famous (Yahwistic) priest, judge and military leader. That ceremony is performed כדבר יהוה ביד שמואל "according to the word of the Lord through Samuel." Clearly Jehoiada has assumed political power for all intents and purposes at this point; the people have him to thank (or spurn) for the coup and it is implied that they would follow him as interim ruler of Judah. The people are considered important in this text, as it is they who supported the coup, initiated by Jehoiada, without question. Moreover, the verse concludes with an allusion to ensuing cultic reform; priest, people and king were all להיות לעם ליהוה "to be YHWH's people." This phrase only occurs elsewhere two times – once in the Chr's source in 2 Kgs 11:17 and once in Deut 27:9 where Moses names the Israelites as people of YHWH.[367] It is quite possible that the narrative in Deut 27-28 in which Moses laid out ceremonies that were to take place on Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerizim, which entail covenantal blessings and curses based on the people's performance/relationship to YHWH, would have come to the mind of the original hearers of the Chr text. If so, Jehoiada is similarly (and apparently intentionally) overshadowed by Moses, also a prophet, priest and military leader. It may well be that the Chr wished the listeners of his text to think of Jehoiada's leadership as parallel to the times of Moses and Samuel (and perhaps Joshua), when no (Davidic) king ruled over Israel/Judah. In its ancient theocratic state, YHWH moved through history via non-royal priest-prophet-military strategists; in fact, certain traditions outside of Chronicles argued that, from its inception, the monarchy had been viewed with suspicion (cf. Deut 17:14-15; 28:36; 1 Sam 8:4-9).

---

[365] Dillard, *2 Chronicles* , 183.

[366] See the bibliographic information for Rahmani's extensive study on Jerusalemite funerary customs in my comments on 23:10 above.

[367] On the typology/phraseology of this covenantal formulation, see Delbert R. Hillers, *Covenant: The History of a Biblical Idea* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), 37, esp. n. 90.

2 Chr 23:17

The cultic revolution immediately followed the political revolution, according to Jehoiada's covenant. ויבאו כל העם בית הבעל "and all the people went to the house of Baal" to destroy its altars, images and to kill Mattan, the high priest of Baal. That the people succeeded would have demonstrated to a Yehudite audience that 1) the people were following YHWH's Law given to Moses (Deut 13:6–9) and that 2) Baal was impotent and could not do anything about the death of his high priest in his own temple.[368] It is quite possible that the audience would have been familiar with the tradition of the massacre of the priests of Baal by Elijah on Mt. Carmel (1 Kgs 18:40) and Jehu's cunning massacre of the priests of Baal (2 Kgs 10:18-28). However, the present story was different in that, instead of one Yahwistic charismatic leader's attack on the Baal cult, "all the people" were involved, perhaps suggesting the democratization and approval of cultic reform. In addition, though it may be implied, it is not certain that Jehoiada gave explicit orders himself for the people to attack the Baal temple. This may suggest that "all the people" had a significant change of heart after the covenant that (re)committed them to YHWH, especially given the fact that the temple seemed to have been functioning immediately prior to the people's attack (i.e., the priest seemed to be attending to duties within the temple), though for how long cannot be certain.[369]

2 Chr 23:18-19

The activities that constitute Jehoiada's religious reforms are described with a view to the past. It was important to illustrate that Jehoiada, as surrogate ruler of Judah, was not attempting to draw up "new" laws or establish "good" new institutions to replace "bad" old institutions; rather, he was reestablishing the "proper" ancient Yahwistic cult that had been formerly mediated by legendary leaders such as David and Moses.[370] The reform consisted of two "restorative" actions, via both royal and cultic order: 1) Jehoiada restored the internal purity of the Temple: he placed the offices of the Temple (described here as sacrificial duties) under the authority of the Levites, per David's royal orders (1 Chr 23:6, 25–31) and per Moses' cultic order (Deut 31:9).[371] 2) Jehoiada placed השוערים "gatekeepers" על שערי "at the gates" of the house of YHWH, in order to prevent anyone/thing that was unclean from entering ולא יבא טמא לכל דבר "so that no one would enter who was in any way unclean" thereby serving as protectors of the purity of the Temple.[372] Moreover, such reforms were performed, without question or hesitation, בשמחה ובשיר "with rejoicing and singing" as David had commanded (cf. 1 Chron 15:16, 19; 2 Chron 23:13; see also 1 Chron 13:8; 2 Chron 5:13; 29:27). At least ideologically, this was not a time of fear and uncertainty, but a time of divine blessing and rejoicing, an effective rhetorical strategy for "sanitizing" the violent nature of what had just occurred.

---

[368] The impotence of Baal would simultaneously suggest the superior power of YHWH.

[369] The Baal cult is mentioned only once by the Chr prior to this account in 2 Chr. 17:3 and then only in praise of Jehoshaphat who had *not* engaged in Baal worship.

---

[370] Cf. the "Cyrus Cylinder," translated by R. W. Rogers (*ANET*, 315-316). The text propagates the ideology that the former king, Nabonidus, had ignored the proper cult(s) and that the gods had therefore nominated Cyrus, the usurper, as rightful king due to his respect for the gods and institutions of the past, including the restitution of temples that had been ignored or "misused." Part of his "liberation" included lifting the "yoke" of past leaders from the citizens of Babylon. Although Cyrus does not name leaders from the past whom he is emulating, it is clear from the wording of his reforms that, ideologically, they are an attempt to "restore" rather than to "make new."

[371] Cf. the roughly contemporary description of cultic restoration by Jewish leaders in Elephantine; translated by H. L. Ginsberg, "Aramaic Letters: Petition for Authorization to Rebuild the Temple of Yaho." (*ANET*, 491-492). The Jews petition the Persian governor, Bagoas, for funds to rebuild the Yahwistic Temple ("as it was built before") that had been destroyed by a competing Egyptian cultic community. The leaders promise a blessing from Yaho (i.e., YHWH) upon the governor, provided he funds the restoration. The leaders would sacrifice a burnt offering, among others, in his name, "worth a thousand talents of silver and gold." The account in Chr and here both seem to indicate that sacrifice to YHWH was of primary importance during times of cultic restoration. Moreover, if sacrifices were to be once again offered, a blessing was promised to those leaders involved in the restoration.

On the issue of Moses and (or, perhaps better, vs.) David as cultic founders in Chronicles, see Simon J. De Vries, "Moses and David as Cult Founders in Chronicles," *JBL* 107 (1988): 619-639. De Vries argues that David, not Moses, is the primary figure involved wherever the Levitical offices are reported; he suggests that the Chr may have been a Levitical priest himself (perhaps even a singer) and thus Chronicles was written largely as an apologia for the Levitical office, in apposition with the Priestly office in the late Persian Period.

[372] On the construction of טמא לכל דבר as "anyone/thing unclean," cf. Lev 5:2.

2 Chr 23:20

The final act of the coup occurs; Jehoiada leads out the various military and cultic leaders and "all the people" from the Temple to the palace to place Joash on the throne. The rhetoric here is designed to be inclusive of the military, the cult and all the people of Judah; absolutely everyone is involved in the royal parade from the Temple to the palace. Again, this was designed to show that Jehoiada (and Joash) had no opposition whatsoever in the coup – the elite and public alike actively support the change in government. This collective group, representing every group in Judah (i.e., this was not the work of Jehoiada himself) places Joash on the throne of the kingdom.

2 Chr 23:21

Once the Davidic king has been placed back in his rightful place as ruler of Judah, the land had שקטה "rest." The root שקט is used elsewhere by Chr six times (1 Chr 4:40; 22:9; 2 Chr 13:23; 14:4-5; 20:30); in every case, it refers to peace in the land/polity of Israel/Judah in the sense of a lack of political or religious turmoil. This sense of order to disorder was common to other monarchs in the Persian Period. Kuhrt points out that on the tomb of Darius I, an inscription describes the "commotion" that the whole world was in prior to the Persian king "put(ting) it in its place," i.e., that he had created order out of disorder. Moreover, his success was attributed first and foremost to the "great god Ahuramazda" who had "given Persia supremacy" over its subjugated lands and peoples.[373]

2 Chr 24:1

It should be noted that Joash's regnal notice does not include his father's name (though it was mentioned in 22:11).[374] This may have helped emphasize the dire nature of the six-year illegitimate, non-Davidic rule of Athaliah, or perhaps Ahaziah's name is left unmentioned because of his ill-fated alliance with the northern kingdom (2 Chr 22:4) which is blamed for Athaliah's rule over Judah.

---

[373] Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East*, 676-678.
[374] The Chr mentions every monarch's mother except for Jehoram.

2 Chr 24:2

The positive period of Joash's reign is inextricably connected to the life of Jehoiada.[375] This would have encouraged the hearers of this text to evaluate Joash's reign as good merely because of the priest that made it good. According to the story, on his own, Joash was totally unsuccessful as a ruler save for the time period in which he reigned under the auspices of Jehoiada. In effect, the audience might as well have considered any good that came from Joash's reign to in reality have come from Jehoiada; once again, the importance of the priestly office was emphasized over the royal office.

2 Chr 24:3

Jehoiada's first action once Joash had been placed on the throne was to ensure that the Davidic line would be preserved through Joash's progeny.[376] Two wives were taken by Jehoiada (now acting as a surrogate father to Joash) who immediately bore sons and daughters for the king.[377] For the Chr, of course, children were considered a sign of blessing for Israel/Judah's monarchy; cf. 1 Chr 14:3-7 (David); 2 Chr 11:18-23 (Rehoboam); and 2 Chr 13:21 (Abijah).[378] The rhetorical effect of this verse was threefold and argues that: 1) Jehoiada had no designs on the throne for himself, something that might have been conceivable, given how effective his coup was;[379] 2) the period during which Joash was linked to Jehoiada was indeed blessed by YHWH as indicated by the royal children; 3) the Davidic line was secure even if something should happen to Joash.

2 Chr 24:4

---

[375] See also 24:14 and 26:5.

[376] See Robert R. Wilson, "Old Testament Genealogies in Recent Research.," *JBL* 94 (1975): 169-189 on the issues surrounding the functions of Hebrew Bible genealogies; Wilson lists six on p. 172. The sixth claims that certain genealogies "...seem to have been used by office-holders to legitimate their offices. Also involved in these passages may be a postexilic attempt to demonstrate the racial purity of Israel and to express a continuity between preexilic and postexilic Israel." Certainly 24:2 would have helped to quell the fear of another disruption in the Davidic line - the key link between pre and post-exilic "Israel" - as well as serving to demonstrate the royal line's racial purity.

[377] Mothers (Gen 21:21), fathers (e.g., Gen 24; 38:6; Ex 2:21; 1 Sam 18:21) or even patrons (Gen 37:45-46) could play a role in arranged marriages in the Hebrew Bible.

[378] Klein, "Joash in Chronicles," 118.

[379] One could argue that this was part of the Chr's theology/sense of proportion; as capable as Jehoiada was, he was a faithful servant of YHWH and the monarchy. On the issues of the Chr's sense of proportion, see Ben Zvi, "A Sense of Proportion," 50.

The phrase ויהי אחריכן "and it happened after this that" shifts the setting of the narrative from a young, impotent monarch to a time when Joash was old enough to act with his own volition.[380] However, because Jehoiada was still alive and the hearer has been told that the young king did what was right as long as the priest was alive, the narrative first describes a situation that Jehoiada would have had keen interest in but ascribes the launch of the Temple restoration to Joash. The rhetoric functions to demonstrate that, all things being equal, a pious king will be concerned first with the proper function and maintenance of the Temple, a common ANE prerogative of the king.[381]

2 Chr 24:5

Joash held a meeting with the priests and Levites who were to begin collecting an מדי שנה בשנה "annual" Temple tax from Judah and "all Israel"[382] to maintain and repair the Temple; moreover, they were commanded to do so ואתם תמהרו "quickly." However, the Temple staff ignores the king's command. It may be the case that they do so because the king had yet to embed his command in Mosaic tradition because after the Law (whatever that is understood to be) is invoked, the command is carried out without question. Whatever the legal/textual basis for the Levites' rejection of the king's command, (which members of an illiterate Yehudite audience could not have checked for themselves anyway) this Levitical act of civil disobedience could have been understood as a "powerplay" which would highlight the "veto" power of the Levites in the case of any unacceptable royal decrees. Alternatively, the "active" collection of the Levites (and priests) in the towns of Judah may have been seen as excessively intrusive; it is possible that the proclamation that was accepted later by the Levites, which commanded the people to bring their tribute to the Temple (24:8-10) was viewed as less intrusive and therefore more acceptable to both the Temple staff and the public.

---

[380] The phrase היה עם לב יואש לחדש "it was in the heart of Joash to renew" seems to indicate an act of the emotional/intellectual will of Joash; i.e., that he was not provoked by Jehoiada to restore the Temple.

[381] The (re)building of temples in the ANE was largely a monarch's prerogative and responsibility; see, e.g., Nemet-Nejat, *Daily Life in Ancient Mesopotamia* , 221.

[382] On the issue of the term "Israel" and its use in Yehud, see Ben Zvi, "Inclusion in and Exclusion from Israel," 121-125.

Either way, the power of the monarch is checked while the power of the Temple staff is bolstered in this narrative, a reflection of the Chr's actual social circumstances.[383]

2 Chr 24:6

After some time had passed, Joash summoned Jehoiada to inquire about the Levites' tardiness regarding his direct command. At this point, Joash invokes a Mosaic law that apparently was known by the Temple staff to encourage/demand that his decree be taken seriously.[384] To an ancient audience, it may have seemed strange that Jehoiada seems to ignore the direct question of Joash as to מדוע "why" he had not enforced the collection of the money. Certainly, as a high-ranking member of the Temple staff he would have known about the initial command as well as the reason(s) for the delay/disregard by the cultic officials in charge of the collection of the משאת "tax." Jehoiada would also have known about any Mosaic laws that demanded taxation for the upkeep of the Temple. It is possible that Jehoiada's silence at the question of the king functions rhetorically to again limit or even undermine the monarch's power, while implying that taxes could not be collected without the consent and/or assistance of the priests/Levites – even if the monarch (and Moses!) had explicitly commanded otherwise.[385]

2 Chr 24:7

A specific reason is given for the disrepair of the Temple; כי "because" Athaliah and her sons' apostasy had robbed the house of YHWH of its expensive cultic objects (cf. 2 Chr 5:1; 15:18). The narrator takes one last opportunity to disparage the queen by describing her as המרשעת; which *HALOT* translates as "the embodiment of godlessness."[386] Whatever the exact description, it amounts to a rhetorical statement about the absolute apostasy of the (former) queen and her legacy on the house of YHWH.

---

[383] For other interpretive possibilities, see my comments on 24:5 in chapter 2 above.

[384] This משאת משה "Mosaic tribute" may have been the census tax described in Ex 30:14; 38:26; cf. also Mt 17:24.

[385] To be sure, even though Jehoiada does not answer the king, he eventually agrees with/obeys Joash in v. 24 ויאמר המלך ויעשו ארון אחד "and the king commanded and they made a chest."

[386] The construction is an *hapax legomenon*.

The עתליהו המרשעת בניה "sons of the wicked Athaliah" are left unnamed. In 22:10 the Chr states that she murdered all the royal sons of Judah, so the scion described here must refer to Athaliah's sons by someone other than Jehoram.[387] The political "planting" of a monarch's offspring into the local cult(s) was a common Near Eastern convention that attempted to consolidate the two most important sources of power (political and religious) for a royal family.[388] Whoever they were, these individuals had פרצו "broken into/breached" the house of God and used כל קדשי בית יהוה "all the holy things of the house of YHWH." As such, these expensive, holy, cultic objects had been rendered impure and unusable in the Temple – and required replacement if the Temple's YHWH cult was to once again function properly.

2 Chr 24:8-9

To an original public audience, this story would have encouraged the continuation of the collection of Temple taxes which, in return, would have been understood to bring divine blessings upon the land. The evidence of such blessings is demonstrated quickly by the sheer volume of income derived by Joash's order. Of course, Joash's original order had been rejected and this new collection proclamation allows the people "to bring" (hifil inf. cs. form of בוא) their levies to the king's chest of their own volition. In addition, the tax is once again described in apposition to משה עבד האלהים "Moses the servant of God." Judah's elite (including the priesthood and the monarchy), acting as conduits of YHWH, in the tradition of Moses, initiated their taxation agenda with a singular voice couched in terms of ancient laws.

The במדבר "(image of being) in the wilderness" was evoked to remind the people of their indebtedness to YHWH, who provided for Israel when she could not. To a Yehudite audience, the imagery of the wilderness would have called to mind early traditions of a time when YHWH miraculously provided (bread and meat Ex 16:12 and water Ex 15:25; 17:6) at a time when the people could not provide for themselves. This ideology claims a certain innate indebtedness of "all Israel" to YHWH, while supporting the Temple staff's claim, as agent of YHWH, to a portion of the public's finances.

---

[387] It is also possible that the "sons" of Athaliah were supporters of Athaliah, with בניה referring to individuals who are "of the kind of" Athaliah (i.e., supporters of her regime).

[388] The most well-known example comes from Sargon of Akkad, who set his daughter as high-priestess of the moon god, Nanna at Ur, effectively consolidating the kingdoms of Akkad and Sumer for the first time. See Nemet-Nejat, *Daily Life in Ancient Mesopotamia*, 219 and Arthur Bernard Knapp, *The History and Culture of Ancient Western Asia and Egypt* (Chicago: Dorsey Press, 1988), 140-141.

2 Chr 24:10

The verse begins with the verb שמח "rejoice" in its 3cs form; "all the people were rejoicing." The root appears to be a *leitwort* in Chr and is found in 13x (1 Chr 16:10, 31; 29:9 (2x); 2 Chr 6:41; 7:10; 15:15; 20:27; 23:13, 21; 24:10; 29:36; 30:25). Of these, the majority occur within the context of material blessings that tended to result in sacrificial giving at the (site of the) Temple in Jerusalem. Moreover, in each case, the whole community is described as being involved. In 1 Chr 16:10 and 31, a psalm of thanksgiving, David encourages מבקשי "those who seek"[389] YHWH to rejoice. According to the story, the ark had just been successfully brought to Jerusalem and sacrifices had been made to YHWH (David had also given foodstuffs to every person in Israel). In 29:9, both the people and David rejoice because the tribal and military leaders of Israel had given so generously to the construction of the Temple; given the description of the amounts of precious metals/gems given, the appearance of YHWH's blessing is evident. The day after all the material gifts are brought to the temple, numerous sacrifices are made to honor Solomon's coronation. In 2 Chr 6:41 and 7:10, the root שמח "to rejoice" occurs in the context of Solomon's dedication of the Temple (which may be seen as "step 2" of the ark's movement from without to within the Temple). The sacrifices made at the dedication ceremony were innumerable (5:5; 7:4-5). In 15:15, all Judah rejoiced after Asa's cultic reforms, (at the behest of the prophet Azariah) the great sacrifices that followed them and the swearing of an oath to בקש "seek" YHWH. In 20:27, the men of Judah and Jerusalem rejoice after YHWH allows them to slaughter the Moabites and Ammonites; the soldiers promptly pillage the cities and carry off three days' worth of booty. The blessing of YHWH is here made explicit by the etiological function of the story; the place is named ברכה. In 29:36, Hezekiah and all the people rejoice at the abundance of sacrifices that were made after Hezekiah's cultic reforms; moreover, in 30:25, the whole assembly rejoiced at the sheer abundance of the sacrificial giving during Hezekiah's Passover. An interesting corollary of this usage of

---

[389] On the rhetorical significance of the root בקש "seek," see Schaefer, "The Significance of Seeking God in the Purpose of the Chronicler," 54-67.

שמח "rejoice" in Chr shows that it always occurs in the context of bloodshed, whether human or animal. The three verses above that I have not mentioned occur in the context of the death of Athaliah; the people rejoice at the impending death of the queen in 2 Chr 23:13 and then at her actual death in 23:21. In addition, it is explicitly stated that the land is blessed (through its "rest") due to Athaliah's execution. Perhaps it is implied that this is *why* the "king's chest" is so easily and regularly filled by the people of the land in 24:10 and *without burden*. This verse also serves as a prime example of the text's persuasive position on certain issues. Here, as with the latter verses (e.g., all the people, every man, all of Judah, King X and all the people, etc.), there is an overt sense of completeness in the verse with the "rapid-fire" of words signifying "all/full/complete" כל and כל and כלה. The sentence provides both onomatopoeic and semantic rhetoric. "All the princes/chiefs" and "all the people" cast in their tribute into the "king's chest" until it was "all full." The verb כלה carries a similar semantic meaning to כל, "to finish/complete." The verse imagines all the tribal leaders and all the people under them bringing tribute to the house of YHWH.[390]

2 Chr 24:11

The result of Joash's taxation program is portrayed as having been successful. In fact, it is eminently possible that this story was used by the Chr to reflect a decree of the Persian administration over the the Jerusalem Temple. Schaper has argued that, during the Persian period, two men were appointed to oversee the collection of Yehud's taxes: the "royal commissioner" and the "assayer."[391] The Chr's description of the king's פקיד "officer" and ספר "scribe" may relate to these offices. Moreover, the fact that the chief priest also has a פקיד may further reflect a time when Temple officials were primarily in charge of the Empire's taxation.[392]

---

[390] It should be mentioned that revenue could be collected from other Yehudite classes (e.g., merchants) as well as from the spoils of war and from tribute paid by other subjugated nations.

[391] Schaper, "Jerusalem Temple as an Instrument," 534.

[392] Cf. the Chr's source in 2 Kgs 12:10-13. The nominal form of פקד "appoint" occurs only twice (once in the book of Kings in this pericope and once in 25:19) after the slaughter of Mattan, the priest of the Baal cult, when Jehoiada appoints officers over the house of YHWH. As a whole, Kings seems to reflect a time where there was more independent control of the taxation process whereas the Chr's account seems to reflect a highly structured political era when officers/scribes were appointed; the nominal form of פקד occurs 10x throughout Chronicles.

The phrases רב הכסף and כסף לרב "much money" appear to show what is possible when the monarchy and cult work in harmony for the house of YHWH; divine blessing of material wealth is powerfully implied. The "moral" of this story might be described as "the more you (the public) give to the Temple of YHWH, the more YHWH gives you to give to the Temple." The "king's chest" overflowed with money on a daily basis and, of course, the public who did the filling "rejoiced" in the king's taxation proclamation.

2 Chr 24:12

Of course, the money is not kept by the king or Jehoiada for their own selfish purposes but is immediately given לחדש "to restore" and לחזק "to strengthen" the Temple. In addition to the improvements to the Temple, economic spin-offs are described; benefactors include members of Judah's laborers: masons, metal workers and carpenters. It is repeatedly stated that the Temple was *not* made "new" (i.e., changed) but was חדש "restored" (in the piel stem) to its מתכנת "original specifications" (v. 13). This is a consistent rhetorical strategy in the pericope, used to endorse the idea of doing something/anything new while maintaining ancient traditions (real or imagined). חדש is used in the piel 9x (1 Sam 11:14; Isa 61:4; Ps 51:12; 104:30; Job 10:17; Lam 5:21; 2 Chr 15:8; 24:4,12) and is always used with a reference to restoration. The example from Lamentations is instructive as it places חדש and שוב "turn back/repent" in apposition to each other, both suggesting a need for human restoration to and via YHWH. חזק is used in the piel 64x and consistently refers to something/someone (that already exists) being strengthened/hardened by another.

2 Chr 24:13-14

As the money multiplied by divine blessing to fill the Temple's coffers, so the ויעשו עשי המלאכה ותעל ארוכה למלאכה "work of the workers" multiplied and ארוכה "healed" the Temple. After the restoration of the Temple, there was still money שאר "left over" which was immediately brought לפני המלך ויהוידע "before the king and Jehoiada." It should be noted at this point that the primary actor throughout the story seems to be Jehoiada and not Joash, based on the use of proper names. Jehoiada's name is presented 20x in the story, while Joash's name is presented 6x; the more generic בן המלך "son of the king" or המלך "the king" is used to refer to Joash 28x.[393] Even though Joash decides to restore the Temple, he appears powerless to do anything without the priest's blessing; and, when he does accomplish something (as he does here) he is called המלך "the king" not יואש "Joash."

The left over money is turned into cultic כלי "utensils." The term is used 3x in this verse, perhaps to continue the imagery of abundance, while the description of the materials used to create the cultic objects זהב וכסף "gold and silver" suggests similar imagery of plenty. With the completion of the Temple's reconstruction, the narrator states that burnt offerings were תמיד "continually" burnt during all the rest of the days of Jehoiada the priest. The adverb תמיד is used 8x in Chronicles; 1 Chr 16:6, 11, 37, 40; 23:31; 2 Chr 2:3; 9:7; 24:14. In every case but one (2 Chr 9:7), it is used in the context of doing something in relation to YHWH; sometimes in a cultic ceremony surrounding the ark such as trumpeting, often in the context of continually offering sacrifices and sometimes in דרש and בקש "seeking" YHWH. In the case of 2 Chr 9:8, the Queen of Sheba indicates that Solomon's officials must be happy to תמיד "continually" העמדים "(be) standing" in the presence of so wise a monarch. Yet, the very next verse goes to great lengths to show that the Queen is very aware of just who had "established" Solomon; she acknowledges his god: לתתך על כסאו למלך ליהוה אלהיך "setting you on his throne as king for YHWH your God." YHWH had given Solomon his (YHWH's) throne for him (Solomon) to be a king for YHWH his (Solomon's) god. In other words, Solomon's empire, as great as it was according to the story, was only his insofar as YHWH has given it to him. Any institution or person described as תמיד "continually" in Chr is only so for the good pleasure of YHWH, the god of Israel/Judah; a "fact" known even to powerful foreign monarchs.[394]

---

[393] This is contra the conclusion made by R. H. Lowery, *The Reforming Kings: Cult and Society in First Temple Judah* (JSOTSup 120; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 210, where it is argued that, based on evidence from Kings and Chronicles, Judean cult reforms were always led by kings and were intended to serve the social-political interests of the monarchy. I would argue that the "intent" of the stories in Chonicles is to serve the interests of the priesthood of the late Persian Period, by *diminishing* the roles of the Judean kings, especially as seen in the Jehoiada/Joash narrative.

[394] Cf. also the alleged letter sent by King Hiram of Tyre in 2 Chr 2:1 to Solomon prior to the building of the Temple, who notes, with the Queen above, that YHWH had נתן "given" Israel's throne to Solomon.

2 Chr 24:15

Once the Temple had been described as functioning properly and continually, the Chr narrates the death of Jehoiada. This description is done in two parts in this verse and a third part in 24:16. First, Jehoiada's death is described with a euphemism for a well-lived life וישבע ימים, which may be translated something like "a ripe old age" (lit. "and he filled days").[395] Second, Jehoiada's death is described quantitatively; וימת בן מאה ושלשים שנה במותו "and he died at 130 years in his death."[396] If length of life was seen as an indication of blessing or curse upon an important individual, Jehoiada was placed squarely in the upper echelons of the Yehudite community's most celebrated and legendary leaders such as Moses, Aaron and Joshua.

2 Chr 24:16

The third aspect of Jehoiada's veneration is his unique inclusion into the Jerusalem necropolis ויקברהו בעיר דויד עם המלכים "they buried him in the city of David among the kings." So there is no doubt whatsoever about why this unusual honor was conferred upon the priest, the Chr immediately adds the reason, beginning with the כי causative particle; כי עשה טובה בישראל ועם האלהים וביתו "for he did good in Israel and to God and his house." Jehoiada had served his country by returning a Davidic monarch to the throne (at his own peril), had served his king by performing his coronation, choosing his wives and as acting as his vice-regent when Joash was too young to act for himself and had served his god by playing a key role in the restoration of the Temple.[397] His contribution to the Davidic monarchy was to be remembered by future generations – in a similar way to certain other kings' contributions. The rhetorical effect of Jehoiada's funerary description is clear; a priest could contribute to the religio-politico-economical well-being of Judah as well as (or better than) a Davidic monarch; whether in the monarch's absence, in his presence or even in spite of him. Clearly this would have been a pivotal story during the Persian period (and later) in the absence of a Davidic king and in the presence of priest-kings. The high priest could serve the public in *at least* as good a manner as the best Davidic kings of the past. Likewise, in a situation where there was shared rule between the priesthood and a (foreign) "secular" governor, this story would provide an example of the two institutions working seamlessly for the will of YHWH, which would bring blessing to כל העם "all the people."[398]

---

[395] The same phrase is used to describe the death of David in 1 Chr 29:28; Israel/Isaac in Gen 35:29 and Job in Job 42:17. All these characters had been clearly blessed by YHWH and it is reasonable to assume that a Yehudite audience would have been familiar with some or all of them.

[396] Cf. also the so-called limitation of life to 120 years in Gen 6:3.

[397] Klein, "Joash in Chronicles," 122.

2 Chr 24:17

The audience would have expected Joash to change after the death of Jehoiada because of the literary cues in 24:2 and 24:14 and, naturally, this is exactly what happens. Joash's name is mentioned only twice after Jehoiada's death (24:22, 24), both times in the context of judgment from YHWH; through the rest of the narrative, he is simply called "the king." This rhetorical anonymity may carry with it a sense of weakness; that is to say that the king was impotent, as opposed to the consistent naming of a powerful (if legendary) king.[399] At any rate, Joash apparently finds the worship of the princes of Judah irresistible and immediately שמע "listens to" (and perhaps "obeys") them.[400]

2 Chr 24:18

The apostasy is both swift and absolute. It is ironic that the house of YHWH is abandoned so quickly (ויעזבו את בית יהוה אלהי אבותיהם "and they abandoned the house of YHWH, god of their fathers"), after Joash went to such lengths to restore it.[401] The motif of abandonment is the key to chapter 24; it occurs 5 times in the chapter – the highest concentration of the root of any chapter in Chronicles. The האשרים "Asherim" and העצבים "the idols" are worshipped in YHWH's stead. It might also be mentioned here that given Redford's folk archetypes of the "exposed child who-is-to-be-king" that the audience perceived an early ironic twist; rather than becoming a great Judahite king, by his own actions, Joash abandons what could have been an equally "legendary" great destiny.[402]

---

[398] See also the comments of Berquist, *Judaism in Persia's Shadow*, 153-155, regarding the relationship between priests and politicians in what he calls "colonial" Yehud.

[399] If the occurrence of names can be understood to indicate relative significance of any (royal) person, the following data is significant: David's name is mentioned 253 times in Chronicles; Solomon is mentioned 102 times; Hezekiah 42 times and Josiah 18 times.

[400] The root חוה is used 14 times in Chronicles (1 Chr 16:29; 21:21; 29:20; 2 Chr 7:3,19,22; 20:18; 24:17; 25:14; 29:28-30; 32:12; 33:3). Of these references, 12 are in the context of the worship of deities (either YHWH or foreign gods). David (1 Chr 21:21) and Joash (24:17) are the only kings who are worshipped. While the narrative of David being worshipped is not portrayed as a negative, the worship of Joash is. The rhetorical effect on a Yehudite audience would likely have been a heightened sense of Joash's hubris which would be expected to end in disaster for the arrogant/impotent king. In a more general sense, the narrative could be taken to mean that it is dangerous for anyone but YHWH to accept the worship of another human.

[401] The root עזב is used 28 times in Chronicles, usually in the context of forsaking YHWH, YHWH forsaking the people (or a king) or the people (or a king) forsaking foreign deities (1 Chr 10:7; 14:12; 16:37; 28:9,20; 2 Chr 7:19,22; 10:8,13; 11:14; 12:1,5; 13:10-11; 15:2; 21:10; 24:18,20,24-25; 28:6,14; 29:6; 32:31; 34:25). In the context of Chronicles, perhaps the "irony" is partially mitigated by the fact that apostasy is rampant; however, in the immediate context of the story, Joash's apostasy appears, at the very least, ungrateful.

האשם "the guilt" brought upon Judah and Jerusalem by Joash's actions is of a national quality. The root is used five times in Chronicles (1 Chr 21:3; 2 Chr 24:18; 28:10,13; 33:23) and in each case it is used in the context of national guilt before YHWH.[403] The rhetorical effect of this is that Judah's most powerful political leaders would either bring YHWH's blessing (as in the case of Jehoiada) or guilt before YHWH; such guilt was not viewed as an insignificant matter – indeed, all the people would be tangibly affected, positively or negatively. In Yehud, this narrative could conceivably have been used both to promote rebellion against any leader who was thought by the elite to be transgressing the institutions of YHWH (in Jerusalem) and to shore up support for any leader who was thought to be keeping the institutions of YHWH.[404]

2 Chr 24:19

Notwithstanding the flagrant disregard for him, YHWH does not yet abandon Judah and Jerusalem or its king. He first sends prophets to encourage the king's and the princes' repentance. The prophetic warning is unheeded, which was probably anticipated by an ancient audience who was aware of the importance of the life of Jehoiada to Joash's success. That the prophets ויעידו "testified" against Joash suggests something of an inclusio between this verse and the עדות "testimony" presented to Joash at his coronation. If it is reasonable to believe that the presentation of the עדות "testimony" to Joash represented an agreement between the king and YHWH,[405] then the rejection of YHWH could equally nullify that kingship. The prophets, acting as agents of YHWH would likely have been understood as the only ones who could עוד "testify" against the king on the deity's behalf.[406]

---

[402] I thank Frances Pownall for pointing out this ironic connection.

[403] This is true even in 2 Chr 28 where the northern military leaders of Pekah decide that it would be better to let go the prisoners from Judah and Jerusalem than all Israel be guilty before YHWH.

[404] Of course, exactly how these institutions were kept was always a subjective matter.

[405] See the discussion regarding 23:11 above.

2 Chr 24:20

The spirit of God לבשה "clothes" Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada and speaks through him; if he is not named as a prophet, he certainly acts like one. Zechariah first assumes a position of superiority ויעמד מעל "and he stood above" (the Chr may have rhetorically used this phrase device to "prove" that Zechariah's message was also superior) and then speaks to the king and the princes. What the Spirit of YHWH (through Zechariah) says to the king and princes is one of the more explicit uses of enthymematic rhetoric in the pericope:[407]

ויאמר להם כה אמר האלהים	And he said to them, "Thus says God:
למה אתם עברים את מצות יהוה ולא תצליחו	'Why have you transgressed the laws of YHWH and not prospered?
כי עזבתם את יהוה ויעזב אתכם	Because you have forsaken him, he has abandoned you.'"

The "question" posed by Zechariah on behalf of YHWH was not meant to be answered; the original audiences would have been certain at this point that Joash's apostasy – his lack of regard for the מצות "commands" of YHWH – was the the reason that לא תצליחו "he did not prosper." Indeed, throughout Chronicles, the root צלח "prosper" is inextricably tied to an individual's positive involvement with YHWH in some form.[408] To be quite sure that there are no "wrong" answers given to such an obvious question, Zechariah drives home the message; Joash's abandonment of YHWH resulted in YHWH's abandonment of Joash and ultimately in his demise.

---

[406] It is all the more ironic that Joash appealed to the tent of the עדות (Moses' tent of meeting where he and YHWH met and where the ten commandments, the agreement between the people and YHWH, were kept) when the taxation for the rebuilding of the Temple had been delayed by Jehoiada and the Levites. Joash is depicted as having rejected YHWH and thus his right to rule Judah on behalf of YHWH.

[407] Cf. Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 161.

[408] Such is the case in all 13 occurrences; cf. 1 Chr 22:11,13; 29:23; 2 Chr 7:11; 13:12; 14:6; 18:11,14; 20:20; 24:20; 26:5; 31:21; 32:30.

2 Chr 24:21

The rhetorical force of the argument against abandonment continues as Joash and the princes ויקשרו "conspire" to rid themselves of Zechariah and his message. In 23:13, the last words of Athaliah prior to her execution were a repetition of the nominal form of קשר "conspire." In the latter, an illegitimate queen was about to be deposed by Jehoiada, a pious priest, (and the Levites and all the people) on behalf of YHWH. Here, a legitimate Davidic king is about to murder a pious son of Jehoiada because of the word of YHWH that was brought to him. Moreover, once the decision had been made, Joash מצות "commands" the stoning of Zechariah; not only has Joash ignored the commands of YHWH, his commands will cause the murder of a servant/prophet of YHWH. Furthermore, the act takes place in the Temple courtyard בחצר בית יהוה "in the court of the house of YHWH" almost as if Joash's hubris knows no bounds; at least Jehoiada had the sense to remove Athaliah from the Temple to the Horse Gate before executing her.

2 Chr 24:22

The narrator takes this opportunity to comment directly on Joash's actions. He is accused of not remembering the חסד "loyalty" that Jehoiada had shown him. The root could also refer to the covenant made between himself, Jehoiada and the people (23:16). חסד does not refer to a spontaneous, ultimately unmotivated kindness but to a mode of behavior that arises from a relationship defined by rights and obligations (e.g. husband-wife, parent-child, prince-subjects)."[409] Even if Joash was no longer *technically* bound to Jehoiada after the priest's death, he certainly should have been *morally* obligated to treat the priest's family with a certain amount of respect; especially given that Jehoiada's wife was intimately involved in the salvation and upbringing of the child-king (22:11-12) for at least a period of six years. In fact, Jehoshabeath had likely risked her very life for a child that was not hers. It is also quite possible that Zechariah was the son of the same woman that had save Joash's life. Moreover, it is possible that Zechariah would have been like something of a step-brother to Joash, making the murder all the more horrific to the audience; these two were not strangers, but kin.

---

[409] H. J. Stoebe, "חסד," *TLOT* elec. ed.

Couched in terms of an implicit speech enthymeme, Zechariah's dying words curse Joash because of his actions.[410] He implores ירא יהוה "May YHWH see" (i.e., witness) the murderous act and engender a וידרש "seeking, investigation and/or accounting" of it.[411] It is significant that the text does not use the verbs נקם "avenge" or פקד "visit (vengeance upon)" to signify vengeance. This is likely another ironic/tragic twist in the story, playing off the root דרש's "seek" antonym עזב "forsake"; Joash forsook (i.e., did not seek) YHWH and YHWH forsook (i.e., did not seek Joash). Now, however, Zechariah demands that YHWH seek (the life of) Joash for his actions. For Joash, seeking will come in the form of divine wrath.

2 Chr 24:23

The Arameans become the instrument of YHWH's seeking. Per the Chr's worldview that includes regular narrative of cosmic cause and effect, this is not a random act; ויהי לתקופת השנה "it came to pass at the appointed time (turning?) of the year." Here too, YHWH appoints the time, place and the political instrument for the demise of Joash and the princes. An Aramean army comes to "Judah and Jerusalem," annihilates the princes (co-conspirators with Joash), raid the wealth of the province and send it to the king of Damascus.

2 Chr 24:24

The rhetorical impact of the demise of Joash's kingdom is heightened by the description of the Aramean army as being מצער "small;" YHWH allowed Judah's רב "great" army to be defeated by a few Arameans כי עזבו את יהוה אלהי אבותיהם "because they had forsaken YHWH the god of their fathers." According to Duke, this verse functions as a narrative enthymeme:[412]

> The one(s) who abandon YHWH will be judged.
> Joash, his leaders and his great army abandoned YHWH.

---

[410] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 161.

[411] See also the discussion of דרש by Schaefer, "The Significance of Seeking God in the Purpose of the Chronicler," 59-67.

[412] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 156.

> Therefore, Joash (et al.) was judged (lost his kingdom and was mortally wounded).

Throughout the book of Chronicles, the military plays a subordinate role to the power of YHWH; a great army, more often than not, created a hubristic atmosphere that tended to destroy the leaders of Judah. Alternatively, a small army fighting with YHWH invariably won the day (cf. 1 Chr 21; 2 Chr 13:1-18; 14:8-15; 16:7-9; 25:5-9; 32:1-33; 35:20-24), no matter the impossibly large size of the opposition. In this case, the Arameans fight with few numbers, yet execute the שפטים "judgment" (i.e., of YHWH) on the "great" army of Joash.

2 Chr 24:25-26

The rhetorical effect of the downfall of Joash continues when he was severely injured. Two of his own servants, Zabad the son of Shimeath the Ammonitess, and Jehozabad the son of Shimrith the Moabitess, התקשרו "conspire" against him and ויהרגהו "murder" him on his bed, just as he had murdered Zechariah.[413] The murder takes place על מטתו "on his bed" which is exactly where Joash's life was spared from Athaliah at the beginning of the story in 22:11. The audience is told that the conspiracy was provoked בדמי "because of the blood"[414] of the son of Jehoiada the priest.[415]

In a manner similar to Joash's life and reign, his funerary description is only partially negative; Joash is buried in Jerusalem but not in the royal necropolis. Joash did restore the Temple but he failed to show any courage or character after the death of his mentor, Jehoiada, who was buried where Joash should have been.

2 Chr 24:27

The narrative ends with a typical statement that additional deeds of the king and additional things that happened to him are recorded in other sources. In this case, additional oracles and details of the Temple restoration are apparently recorded in the

---

[413] As mentioned in chapter 2 above, the ethnicity of the assassins would have reiterated to the audience Joash's death was humiliating; he was murdered on his own bed by foreigners who worked for him.

[414] On the causative use of the preposition ב, see Waltke and O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 198.

[415] This appears to be an instance of the *lex talionis* "blood for blood" motif that occurs throughout the Hebrew Bible; cf., e.g. Gen 4:10; 9:6; Ex 21:23.

על מדרש ספר המלכים "treatise of the Book of the Kings." Whether the documents existed or not, the fact that the Chr cites additional "official-sounding" documents gives his audience the impression that (at least parts of) his narratives may be independently verified and thus more trustworthy.[416] Much has been debated as to the authenticity of the sources found in Chr (and Kings). The book identified here may be the same as the book in 2 Chr 16:11 that records additional details regarding Asa's life, although the books are not described identically; at any rate, there is no reason to debate the issue here. The sources simply are not extant and may not be verified.[417]

Conclusions:

Regarding the Chronicler's λόγος

The Seeking Principle

Suffice it to say that Duke's paradigm of "seeking" YHWH was amply demonstrated by the characters of Athaliah, Jehoiada and Joash. Athaliah sought Baal instead of YHWH which caused shame in the land. Shame was illustrated by the fact that she is made to look a fool (23:13), she is not given a proper regnal summary (23:15), her death is associated with peace (23:21) and she is explicitly disparaged (24:7). Jehoiada sought YHWH throughout the narrative, with a steadfast commitment to keep the word of YHWH by reinstating a Davidic king (23:3), by ensuring that Joash had sons to pass the crown (24:3) protecting the sacrosanctity of the Temple (23:6, 14, 19), by following "ancient" cultic laws (23:18), by causing the people to recommit themselves to YHWH (23:16), by destroying the Baal cult (23:17) by helping Joash rebuild the Temple and by reinstating the Temple cult (24:12-14). Joash sought YHWH during the first part of his reign (24:2) by restoring the Temple (24:4-6, 8-14) but abandoned YHWH during the second part by reinstating non-Yahwistic cults (24:18), not heeding YHWH's prophets' repeated warnings (24:19-20) and by murdering YHWH's "prophet" at the doorstep of the Temple (24:21). In sum, Athaliah wholly did *not* seek YHWH, Jehoiada wholly sought YHWH and Joash partially sought YHWH and each life demonstrated various (more or less predictable) consequences.

---

[416] Of course, only those who could read could actually verify anything about written documents, and then only if they were allowed access to such documents.

[417] It should be stated that scholars should at least allow for the possibilities of such sources to be found. Not every archive in Israel/Judah has been excavated and we may not say for certain whether such sources ever existed or not.

Deliberative Rhetoric and the People's "Happiness"

Aristotle's species of deliberative rhetoric was expressed by the explicit "happiness" of the people when they crowned Joash king (23:12-13, 21) and when they paid their taxes (24:10) at the Temple. The happiness of the people is implied during the peace and quiet following Athaliah's death (23:21), the sheer wealth they amassed following Joash's taxation proclamation that allowed the full reconstruction of the Temple, the purchase of cultic instruments and the continual sacrificing to YHWH during the days of Jehoiada (24:11-14). Of course, the opposite is also true; various acts demonstrate degrees of unhappiness. That the people so willingly and completely rally around Jehoiada's charge(s) implies that they were "unhappy" with the apostate Athaliah (23:8, 10-11, 13), the people are charged along with Joash for abandoning YHWH (24:20) which resulted in the looting of Judah by foreigners (24:23) and the great army of Judah was destroyed (and embarrassed?) by a small foreign army (24:24).[418]

Ceremonial Rhetoric and the Figures of Jehoiada, Athaliah and Joash

Without question, the character of Jehoiada is the clearest example of ceremonial rhetoric in the narrative. If the number of times an individual's name is mentioned is a relative indication of importance, Jehoiada is clearly the most important character in the narrative; his name is mentioned twenty times, with Joash and Athaliah's names mentioned only six times each. According to Aristotle's five categories of methods for heightening praise, the following comments may be made:[419]

1. *Show that a person is the first, only or almost only one to do something.* Jehoiada is the only non-king who was buried with the kings at the necropolis in Jerusalem and Jehoiada is one of the few individuals to live 130 years.
2. *Show that a person has done something better than anyone else, based on the common assumption that superiority demonstrates excellence.* Jehoiada's skill during the coup seems difficult to match and, at his death, he is explicitly credited (along with his exceptional burial) with having "done well in Israel and to God and His house."
3. *Show that a person has often achieved the same success in order to demonstrate that s/he was not just fortunate in one instance.* Jehoiada's success is

---

[418] The Aramean invasion also resulted in a lack of peace that had begun after Athaliah's death.

[419] Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*, 1.9.38-41.

repeatedly noted throughout the narrative. Jehoiada was able to reinstate a Davidic king, rid Judah of an evil queen, reinstate YHWH's cult (including rebuilding the Temple and providing for its cultic implements) and destroy competing cults. In each instance, when Jehoiada spoke to the people, they unanimously supported him and his various covenants.

4. *Where possible, highlight the difficult circumstances under which a person accomplishes his/her feat, based on the assumption that the more adversity one overcomes, the more credit s/he deserves.* Jehoiada risked his life in a dangerous political coup. Both his king and cult had been decimated by Athaliah, implying the most difficult of circumstances, yet he championed the revolt because of his commitment to YHWH and his Temple.

5. *Compare a person to other famous people, based on the assumption that one's praise (or depreciation) is magnified if s/he has equaled or surpassed other great people.* As noted at several points above, it is possible to see echoes of other legendary Israelite figures in the life of Jehoiada, including Abraham, Moses, Samuel and David.

Judicial Rhetoric and the Ideology of Justice

While Duke more or less dismisses this species of rhetoric, the motives and conditions of Athaliah, Jehoiada and Joash and the people they affected would very likely have been considered by an ancient audience. Athaliah was wicked because she was an Omride, and therefore illegitimate, ruler. Her evil actions created a state where YHWH was ignored and the people resided in relative poverty, at least in comparison to the wealth that was created once the nation's focus had been turned back to YHWH. Her "people" (עתליהו המרשעת בניה) had desecrated YHWH's Temple resulting in the apostasy of Judah. Her evil influence affected the entire nation; and everyone rejoiced in the peace caused by her death. Jehoiada, on the other hand, was motivated by an indomitable desire to seek out the welfare of YHWH's cult and the Davidic kingship that was to preside over it. In spite of overwhelming odds, he led a successful coup which reinstated the Davidic monarchy resulting in a time of national peace. He also played a key role in the restoration of YHWH's Temple which ultimately resulted in material wealth for all. As distinct from both Athaliah and Jehoiada, Joash's motivations were fickle, a universal sign of human weakness. Even during the good portion of his reign, Jehoiada's piety adumbrates his rule. After the death of Jehoiada, Joash promptly succumbed to the guiles of Judah's political leaders, disregarding both the god and the priest that had placed him on the throne. Moreover, he killed the priest's son for his Yahwistic warning; all without any explicit description of what had motivated the sudden change. As a result of his apostasy, all Judah suffered material loss and an embarrassing military defeat. Evidently the Chr attempted to draw a meaningful connection between the motivations and circumstances of Judah's elite and the welfare of its general population.

Regarding the Chronicler's ἔθος

Elements of the Chr's narrative appear to suggest its credibility and, by implication, the credibility of the rhetor during public performances. First, the text goes to considerable lengths to root itself in Israel/Judah's (ancient) religio-legal traditions; it did not seek to create "new" traditions. A key example of this is found in 23:18:

> Moreover, Jehoiada placed the offices of the house of YHWH under the authority of the Levitical priests, whom David had assigned over the house of YHWH, to offer the burnt offerings of YHWH, as it is written in the law of Moses with rejoicing and singing according to the order of David.

The Chr places various administrative responsibilities under the Levitical priests, according to Davidic tradition. The cultic offerings are offered according to Mosaic traditions and both administrative and cultic responsibilities are performed with rejoicing and singing according to Davidic musical tradition. In other words, the Chr is not creating a "new" history, he is making "right" history (i.e., history as it *should have been*). In a similar fashion, the Temple taxation proclamation is passed only because it is based on Mosaic (Tabernacle) traditions; neither the king nor the high priest "dared" to tax the people based on their own impulses.

Second, the "new" material in the pericope is largely given to providing reasons for the Aramean attack on Judah. He relies on "external proofs" such as the authoritative voices of the unnamed prophets of YHWH and even YHWH himself speaking through Zechariah, the high priest's son. If YHWH spoke against Joash, the leaders and the people, then whatever they had been doing was wrong and should be reviled. The Chr's case is even "bolstered" because the prophets' words came true; YHWH used Judah's enemies to attack his apostate people. Moreover, the audience is assured that significant written sources such as the *Treatise of the Book of the Kings* were consulted as part of the Chr's historical "research."

Finally, the Chr only very sparingly utilizes his direct evaluation of events. In fact, according to Duke, the only explicit enthymeme of the Chr himself is found at the end of the narrative:[420]

> Indeed the army of the Arameans came with a small number of men; yet YHWH delivered a very great army into their hands because they had forsaken YHWH, the God of their fathers. Thus they executed judgment on Joash.

In this way, the Chr retains his "unobtrusive voice of a historical narrator," he displays "good sense, good character, and good will," and "he spoke in an authoritative manner, " while creating a sense of reliability in his narrative based on "a mosaic of authoritative 'witnesses'".[421]

Regarding the Chronicler's πάθος

At this point, it should be evident that the emotions of the Chr's audience were meant to be moved by the actions of the three main characters of the narrative. In Athaliah's case, a figure of utter disdain is illustrated. She was an embarrassment because of her association with the northern kingdom, the house of Omri and the Baal cult. She was an object of comic ridicule and her death became part of a national celebration. Save her two words קשר קשר "Treason, Treason!" (ironic in their own right), the Chr otherwise silenced Athaliah and excluded the usual regnal summary and burial description. Moreover, her death at the Horse Gate recalled the death of Athaliah's mother Jezebel, one of Israel's most despised female figures. The Chr thus used emotional appeal in his depiction of Athaliah as the perfect YHWH-forsaking villain; her character was the polar opposite of the ideal Judahite, and, by implication, Yehudite.

---

[420] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 155. The other two explicit enthymemes are couched in the authoritative voice of Zechariah:

2 Chr 24:20 Then the Spirit of God came on Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest and he stood above the people and said to them, "Thus God has said, `Why do you transgress the commandments of YHWH and do not prosper? Because you have forsaken YHWH, he has also forsaken you.'"

2 Chr 24:22 Thus Joash the king did not remember the kindness which his father Jehoiada had shown him, but he murdered his son and as he died he said, "May YHWH see and avenge!"

[421] Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 136-137.

Jehoiada, in contrast, was the perfect YHWH-seeking hero, an historical figure to take national pride in. His coup placed a Davidic king back on the throne while ridding Judah of its despot queen, he ensured that Joash had sons to one day take his place and his help involvement in reinstituting YHWH's Jerusalemite cult brought both peace and prosperity to Judah. He excelled in religious, political and military leadership, lived an exceptionally long life and was compared to some of the best loved figures in the history of Israel/Judah. Jehoiada was an historical character once loved by all Judah; and, by implication, his YHWH-seeking nature was to be emulated by all Yehud.

Joash's character is somewhat more complicated. As a character who "followed" and never really led of his own volition, he may actually have represented the people themselves, who were themselves led by others. When Joash followed the priest Jehoiada (and thus YHWH), the conditions for peace and prosperity were created; when Joash followed the princes of Judah (and thus not YHWH), the land was looted and war ensued. By implication, Joash represented choice; accordingly the audience was being asked, "Who will you allow to influence you?" If, as a nation, you follow those who follow YHWH (by means of the proper Temple cultus), peace, prosperity and land will follow. If, however, you follow those who abandon YHWH, war, poverty and a lack of land will follow. This story could have been rather useful to priestly leaders in Yehud during its period of dyarchy. It is also possible that a more subtle message could have been perceived; that the people's *primary* loyalties should lie with the YHWH-seeking Jerusalemite priesthood rather than the Persian governor.

Conclusions and Suggestions for further Reflection

This study has attempted to develop and employ the thesis that two rhetorical-critical strategies may be used to aid the scholar in understanding how two historical "audiences" would have read/understood a given text in Chronicles. Chapter one argues that because of the social hierarchy during middle-late Persian Yehud, that it is impossible to understand the "ancient Hebrew mentality" via one methodological reading of a text, as many from the Muilenburg rhetorical school has done in the past. It is my hope that one of the important contributions of this study would be to argue that scholars continue to minimize the tendency towards a monolithic view of past cultures' worldviews.

Chapter one begins with an analysis of the painstaking work of rhetorical critics who may be categorized as those who sought to understand the "art of composition" within the Bible. It was argued that, although most of these scholars stated that they were attempting to understand how ancient Israelite audiences (which are largely left undefined but appear to encompass "all Israel") understood the text, what the analysis *actually* helps one to understand is how the ancient Israelite literate elite would have been able to analyze their texts. One of the major emphases in this type of analysis is intertextuality; it was primarily the Yehudite literati who would have been able to carefully cross examine texts such as 2 Chr 22:10-24:27 and 2 Kgs 11-12 – the largely illiterate general public would have been unable to perform such an analysis themselves not only because of the literary barrier but because they were denied unencumbered access to the Temple libraries where most of Yehud's religious texts were likely to have been kept. A second issue was to illustrate why the rhetorical analyses of Muilenburg's students are useful to understand how the literati may have seen itself reflected in the intricate composition of the Chr's narrative(s). Elite Temple-supported groups (such as priests and Levites) would have had the time to spend finding not only intertextual connections, but other literary devices such as inclusios, chiasms, textual ambiguities, etc. It is likely that such groups' self-perception increased (and potentially became somewhat aggrandized) as they pored over the rich and complex texts that purported to describe their elevated function(s) within Yehudite society. These ancient groups would have, in one sense, been persuaded by their own texts to maximize, expand and fill their lofty offices.

Chapter one then argues that the general populace would have also had some access, however limited, to the Chr's "history." It was argued that because of the literary barrier, some sort of priestly figures would have read texts to the public whether at the Temple or in villages in Yehud. Of course, these "rhetorical situations" create both implicit and explicit power differentials; the circumstances of each public oration would have served to underscore the importance of priest(ly figure)s within Yehud, as agents of YHWH, the god of "Israel." Temple staff would have managed the timing, circumstances, setting, interpretation, etc. of each rhetorical performance of a given text. Moreover, the general public would have heard and not read biblical texts. Hearing and reading are two rather different interpretive processes. Thus, it was argued that an Aristotelian model of rhetorical analysis (following the work of Duke), sensitive to the practices of public oration, is an appropriate method to understand how an ancient public audience would have heard, understood and been persuaded by the text.

Employing "art of composition" rhetorical strategies, chapter two focused on how 2 Chr 22:10-24:27 would have been utilized to characterize the "ideal (high) priest" who, in addition to his pious Temple duties could function as a military strategist, politician and "king". This story is likely to have been especially useful during the latter Persian period, in Yehud, when the power of the priesthood increased during the absence of a Davidic monarch. The Chr's "historical" account would have been useful to argue that the priestly office could indeed expand its duties/privileges when necessary. In fact, in addition to Temple duties, the high priest could do almost everything the king could do *at least as well as the king if not better*. Moreover, the story implies that if the priesthood expanded its duties, it had a right to be compensated accordingly (e.g., the exceptional funerary description of Jehoiada).

Chapter three utilized Aristotelian rhetoric to demonstrate how an ancient Yehudite audience would have heard and been persuaded by the text as it was orated in Yehud. It was argued that Aristotle's primary analytical structures, λόγος, ἔθος, πάθος may be discerned in the text. The λόγος or "rational" means of persuasion was the most significant structure and was based on the ideology of "seeking" YHWH, primarily modeled after David and Solomon. Within the λόγος rubric, deliberative, ceremonial and judicial means of persuasion were analyzed, demonstrating the Chr's concern for appealing to past "happiness" for present action, describing Jehoiada in ceremonial terms and illustrating how the motives of the story's characters might have moved the ancient audience to action. The Chr's ἔθος was then evaluated by his use of known traditions; it was argued that the Chr's portrayal Israel's history was not so "revisionist" in nature that it would have caused major credibility concerns for his audience. Indeed, most of the Chr's "new" material takes the appearance of "independent" evidence, allowing the Chr to maintain an unobtrusive narrative atmosphere. The Chr's πάθος painted his three main characters, Athaliah, Jehoiada and Joash in rather broad representative strokes. Athaliah the protagonist is described in wholly negative terms as the prototypical wicked illegitimate queen and is thus to be hated by the Chr's audience. Jehoiada the hero is described in primarily positive terms; he is the savior of Judah's monarchy, he is the restorer of YHWH's cult, he is the paragon of a high priest, military strategist and politician and is thus to be revered by the Chr's audience. Joash the "pawn" is described in ambiguous terms, even though he is the king, he is perhaps representative of any one of the audience themselves, in that he could be moved towards good (during his time with Jehoiada) or evil (after Jehoiada's death). In one sense, Joash may have at once stood to both encourage those who sought YHWH and to admonish those who would abandon him.

It is my hope that this study will encourage others to consider a more multifaceted approach to the incredibly complex persuasive strategies of Chonicles specifically and the (Hebrew) Bible generally. It is my belief that others may use the methods described above to examine how various other texts in the Bible might have been read/heard/understood in ancient Israel. Moreover, it seems clear that while the two rhetorical analyses do not bear mutually exclusive fruit (as reflected in the analyses above) they do illustrate significant sensitivities to the interpretive abilities of different groups in Persian Yehud. It is eminently possible that if one could convincingly reconstruct a different time period and its extant texts, one could, for example, analyze the traditions of Genesis during the exile, the prophecies of "Hosea" during the Hellenistic period or even how various Hebrew Bible passages were exegeted by New Testament writers and read/heard/understood by their audiences.

Bibliography

Ackroyd, Peter R. *I & II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah*. Torch Bible Commentaries. London: S. C. M. Press, 1973.

Allen, Leslie C. "The First and Second Books of Chronicles." Pages 299-660 in *The First and Second Books of Kings, The First and Second Books of Chronicles, The Book of Ezra, the Book of Nehemiah, the Book of Esther, Additions to Esther, The Book of Tobit, The Book of Judith*. Edited by Leander E. Keck. *The New Interpreter's Bible 3*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1999.

———. "Kerygmatic Units in 1 & 2 Chronicles." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 41 (1988):21-36.

Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. New York: Basic Books, 1981.

Amit, Yairah. ""The Glory of Israel Does not Deceive or Change His Mind": On the Reliability of Narrator and Speakers in Biblical Narrative." *Prooftexts* 12 (1992):201-212.

Aristotle, and George Alexander Kennedy. *Aristotle On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse: Newly Translated with Introduction, Notes, and Appendixes*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Arnhart, Larry. *Aristotle on Political Reasoning: A Commentary on the Rhetoric*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1981.

Auld, A. Graeme. *Kings without Privilege: David and Moses in the Story of the Bible's Kings*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994.

———. "What was the Main Source of the Books of Chronicles?" Pages 91–99 in *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture*. Edited by Matt Patrick Graham and Steven L. McKenzie. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 263*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999.

Avi-Yonah, Michael. *The Holy Land: From the Persian to the Arab Conquests (536 B.C. to A.D. 640): A Historical Geography*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1966.

Balentine, Samuel E. "A Description of the Semantic Field of Hebrew Words for "Hide"." *Vetus Testamentum* 30 (1980):137-153.

Bar-Efrat, Shimeon. *Narrative Art in the Bible*. Edited by David M. Gunn. Translated by Dorothea Shefer-Vanson. Bible and Literature Series 17. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989.

Barrick, W. Boyd. "Another Shaking of Jehoshaphat's Family Tree: Jehoram and Ahaziah Once Again." *Vetus Testamentum* 51 (2001):9-25.

Beentjes, Pancratius C. "Prophets in the Book of Chronicles." Pages 45-53 in *The Elusive Prophet: The Prophet as a Historical Person, Literary Character and Anonymous Artist: Papers Read at the Eleventh Joint Meeting of the Society for Old Testament Study and Het Oudtestamentisch Werkgezelschap in Nederland en België Held at Soesterberg 2000*. Boston: Brill, 2001.

Ben Zvi, Ehud. "The Chronicler as a Historian: Building Texts." Pages 132-149 in *The Chronicler as Historian*. Edited by Matt Patrick Graham, Kenneth G. Hoglund and Steven L. McKenzie. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 238*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.

———. *The House of Omri/Ahab in Chronicles* - to be published in a book on the House of Omri/Ahab edited by L. L. Grabbe 2004.

———. "Inclusion in and Exclusion from Israel as Conveyed by the Use of the Term "Israel" in Post-monarchic Biblical Texts." Pages 95-149 in *The Pitcher is Broken: Memorial Essays for Gösta W. Ahlström*. Edited by Steven W. Holloway and Lowell K. Handy. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995.

———. "Micah 1.2-16: Observations and Possible Implications." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 77 (1998):103-120.

———. "A Sense of Proportion: An Aspect of the Theology of the Chronicler." *Scandanavian Journal of the Old Testament* 9 (1995):37-51.

———. "The Urban Center of Jerusalem and the Development of the Literature of the Hebrew Bible." Pages 194-209 in *Urbanism in Antiquity*. Edited by Walter E. Aufrecht, Neil A. Mirau and Steven W. Gauley. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 244*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.

Berquist, Jon L. *Judaism in Persia's Shadow: A Social and Historical Approach*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.

Betlyon, John Wilson. "The Provincial Government of Persian Period Judea and the Yehud Coins." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 105 (1986):633-642.

Bitzer, Lloyd F. "The Rhetorical Situation." *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1 (1968):1-14.

Blenkinsopp, Joseph. "Temple and Society in Achaemenid Judah." Pages 22-53 in *Second Temple Studies 1: Persian Period*. Edited by P. R. Davies. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 117*. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991.

Boda, M. J. "Chiasmus in Ubiquity: Symmetrical Mirages in Nehemiah 9." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 71 (1996):55-70.

Bordreuil, Pierre, Felice Israel, and Dennis Pardee. "King's Command and Widow's Plea: Two New Hebrew Ostraca of the Biblical Period." *Near Eastern Archaeology* 61 (1998):2-5; 7-13.

Bowman, Alan K., and Greg Woolf. "Literacy and Power in the Ancient World." Pages 1-16 in *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World*. Edited by Alan K. Bowman and Greg Woolf. Cambridge: New York, 1994.

Braun, Roddy. *1 Chronicles*. Word Biblical Commentary 14. Waco, TX: Word Books, 1986.

———. "1 Chronicles 1-9 and the Reconstruction of the History of Israel: Thoughts on the Use of Genealogical Data in Chronicles in the Reconstruction of the History of Israel." Pages 92-105 in *The Chronicler as a Historian: Building Texts*. Edited by Matt Patrick Graham, Kenneth G. Hoglund and Steven L. McKenzie. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 238*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.

Briant, Pierre. *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*. Translated by Peter T. Daniels. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2002.

Brichto, Herbert C. *Toward a Grammar of Biblical Poetics: Tales of the Prophets*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.

Butler, Trent C. "Forgotten Passage from a Forgotten Era (1 Chr 16:8-36)." *Vetus Testamentum* 28 (1978):142-150.

Butterworth, Mike. *Structure and the Book of Zechariah*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 130. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992.

Carter, Charles E. *The Emergence of Yehud in the Persian Period: A Social and Demographic Study*. Edited by David Clines and Philip Davies. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 294. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998.

Clines, David J. A. *Interested Parties: The Ideology of Writers and Readers of the Hebrew Bible*. Edited by David J. A. Clines and P. R. Davies. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 205. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995.

Coggins, R. J. *The First and Second Books of the Chronicles*. Cambridge Bible Commentary. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976.

Davies, Philip R. *In Search of 'Ancient Israel'*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 148. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992.

———. *Scribes and Schools: The Canonization of the Hebrew Scriptures*. Edited by Douglas A. Knight. 1st ed. Library of Ancient Israel. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998.

———, ed. *Second Temple Studies 1: Persian Period*. Edited by Philip Davies and David Clines. JSOT Supplement Series 117. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991.

Day, John. "Echoes of Baal's Seven Thunders and Lightnings in Psalm 29 and Habakkuk 3:9 and the Identity of the Seraphim in Isaiah 6." *Vetus Testamentum* 29 (1979):143-151.

De Vries, Simon J. "Moses and David as Cult Founders in Chronicles." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 107 (1988):619-639.

De Vries, Simon John. *1 and 2 Chronicles*. The Forms of the Old Testament Literature 11. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989.

Dillard, Raymond B. *2 Chronicles*. Edited by David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker. Word Biblical Commentary 15. Waco: Word Books, 1987.

———. "The Literary Structure of the Chronicler's Solomon Narrative." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 30 (1984):85-93.

Domanska, Ewa. "Hayden White: Beyond Irony." *History & Theory* 37 (1998):173-181.

Duke, Rodney K. "A Model for a Theology of Biblical Historical Narratives: Proposed and Demonstrated with the Books of Chronicles." Pages 65–77 in *History and Interpretation: Essays in Honour of John H. Hayes*. Edited by Jeffrey K. Kuan. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 173*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993.

———. *The Persuasive Appeal of the Chronicler: A Rhetorical Analysis*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 88. Sheffield: Almond Press, 1990.

———. "A Rhetorical Approach to Appreciating the Books of Chronicles." Pages 100-135 in *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture*. Edited by Matt Patrick Graham and Steven L. McKenzie. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 263*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999.

Dyck, Jonathan E. *The Theocratic Ideology of the Chronicler*. Edited by R. Alan Culpepper and Rolf Rendtorff. Biblical Interpretation Series 33. Boston: Brill, 1998.

Eisenstadt, S. N. *The Political Systems of Empires*. London: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963.

Eskenazi, Tamara Cohn, and Kent Harold Richards, eds. *Second Temple Studies 2: Temple and Community in the Persian Period*. Edited by David Clines and Philip Davies. JSOT Supplement Series 175. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994.

Fish, Stanley Eugene. *Is There a Text in This Class?: The Authority of Interpretive Communities*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980.

———. "Yet Once More." Pages 29-38 in *Reception Study: From Literary Theory to Cultural Studies*. Edited by James L. Machor and Philip Goldstein. New York: Routledge, 2001.

Fishbane, Michael A. *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Freedman, David Noel, ed. *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. 1st ed. 6 vols. Toronto: Doubleday, 1992.

Frye, Richard N. *The History of Ancient Iran*. Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft: Abt. 3; Teil 7. München: C.H. Beck, 1984.

Garbini, Giovanni. "Hebrew Literature in the Persian Period." Pages 180-188 in *Second Temple Studies 2: Temple and Community in the Persian Period.* Edited by Tamara Cohn Eskenazi and Kent Harold Richards. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 175.* Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994.

Gerson, Stephen N. "Fractional Coins of Judea and Samaria in the Fourth Century BCE." *Near Eastern Archaeology* 64 (2001):106-121.

Golob, Eugene O. "The Irony of Nihilism." *History & Theory* 19 (1980):55-65.

Grabbe, Lester L. *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian.* 2 vols. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992.

———. "Reconstructing History from the Book of Ezra." Pages 98-106 in *Second Temple Studies 1: The Persian Period.* Edited by P. R. Davies. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 117.* Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991.

Graham, M. Patrick. "A Connection Proposed Between 2 Chr 24:26 and Ezra 9-10." *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 97 (1985):256-258.

Graham, Matt Patrick, Kenneth G. Hoglund, and Steven L. McKenzie, eds. *The Chronicler as Historian.* Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 238. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.

Gray, John. *I and II Kings: A Commentary.* The Old Testament Library. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963.

Grayson, Albert Kirk. *Babylonian Historical-Literary Texts.* Toronto Semitic Texts and Studies 3. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975.

Grimaldi, William M. A. *Aristotle Rhetoric: A Commentary.* 2 vols. New York: Fordham University Press, 1980.

Hallo, William W., and K. Lawson Younger, eds. *Context of Scripture II.* 3 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2003.

Haynes, Stephen R., and Steven L. McKenzie, eds. *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and Their Application.* Revised and expanded ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999.

Heidorn, Lisa A. "The Horses of Kush." *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 56 (1997):105-114.

Hillers, Delbert R. *Covenant: The History of a Biblical Idea.* Seminars in the History of Ideas. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969.

Hoglund, Kenneth G. "The Achaemenid Context." Pages 54-72 in *Second Temple Studies 1: Persian Period.* Edited by P. R. Davies. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 117.* Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991.

———. *Achaemenid Imperial Administration in Syria-Palestine and the Missions of Ezra and Nehemiah.* Edited by David L. Petersen. SBL Dissertation Series 125. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992.

———. "The Chronicler as Historian: A Comparativist Perspective." Pages 19-29 in *The Chronicler as Historian.* Edited by Matt Patrick Graham, Kenneth G. Hoglund and Steven L. McKenzie. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 238.* Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.

Jackson, Jared Judd, and Martin Kessler, eds. *Rhetorical Criticism: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg.* Pittsburgh Theological Monograph Series 1. Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1974.

Jacoby, R. "A New Intellectual History?" *American Historical Review* 97 (1992):405-424.

Janzen, David. "Politics, Settlement and Temple Community in Persian-Period Yehud." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 64, no. 3 (2002):490-510.

Japhet, Sara. "Can the Persian Period Bear the Burden? Reflections on the Origins of Biblical History." Pages 35-45 in *Proceedings of the Twelfth World Congress of*

Jewish Studies: Jerusalem, July 29-August 5, 1997: Division A. Edited by Ron Margolin. Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1999.

———. *I and II Chronicles: A Commentary*. 1st American ed. Old Testament Library. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993.

———. *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and its Place in Biblical Thought*. 2nd rev. ed. Beiträge zur Erforschung des Alten Testaments und des antiken Judentum 9. New York: P. Lang, 1997.

———. "Some Biblical Concepts of Sacred Place." Pages 55-72 in *Sacred Space*. New York: New York University Press, 1998.

Jenni, Ernst, and Claus Westermann, eds. *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*. electronic ed. 3 vols. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997.

Johnstone, William. *1 and 2 Chronicles*. 2 vols. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 253–254. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.

Jones, Gwilym H. *1 and 2 Kings: Based on the Revised Standard Version*. Edited by Ronald E. Clements. 2 vols. New Century Bible Commentary. Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1984.

Kalimi, Isaac. "Was the Chronicler a historian?" Pages 73-89 in *The Chronicler as Historian*. Edited by Matt Patrick Graham, Kenneth G. Hoglund and Steven L. McKenzie. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 238*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.

Kansteiner, Wulf. "Hayden White's Critique of the Writing of History." *History & Theory* 32, no. 3 (1993):273-295.

Kennedy, George Alexander. *The Art of Persuasion in Greece*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963.

———. *Classical Rhetoric and its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980.

———. *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984.

Klein, Ralph W. "The Ironic End of Joash in Chronicles." Pages 116-127 in *For a Later Generation: The Transformation of Tradition in Israel, Early Judaism, and Early Christianity*. Edited by Randal A. Argall, Beverly A. Bow and Rodney A. Werline. Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2000.

Knapp, Arthur Bernard. *The History and Culture of Ancient Western Asia and Egypt*. Chicago: Dorsey Press, 1988.

Knoppers, Gary N. ""Yhwh Is Not with Israel": Alliances as a Topos in Chronicles." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 58 (1996):601-626.

Köhler, Ludwig, Walter Baumgartner, Johann Jakob Stamm, and M. E. J. Richardson. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. 5 vols. 1st English electronic ed. New York: E. J. Brill, 1994.

Kugel, James L. *The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and its History*. paperback ed. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998.

Kuhrt, Amelie. *The Ancient Near East*. Edited by Fergus Millar. 2 vols. Routledge History of the Ancient World. New York: Routledge, 1995.

Kuhrt, Amélie. "The Cyrus Cylinder and Achaemenid Imperial Policy." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 25 (1983):83-97.

Landy, Francis. "Poetics and Parallelism: Some Comments on James Kugel's *The Idea of Biblical Poetry*." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 28 (1984):61-87.

Levin, Yigal. "Who Was the Chronicler's Audience? A Hint from His Genealogies." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 122 (2003):229-245.

Lewis, David M. "The Persepolis Tablets: Speech, Seal and Script." Pages 17-32 in *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World*. Edited by Alan K. Bowman and Greg Woolf. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1994.

Lipschits, Oded. "Demographic Changes in Judah Between the Seventh and the Fifth Centuries B.C.E." Pages 323-376 in *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period*. Edited by Oded Lipschits and Joseph Blenkinsopp. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2003.

Liver, J. "The Ransom of the Half Shekel." Pages 54-67 in *Yehezkel Kaufmann Jubilee Volume*. Edited by M. Haran. Jerusalem, 1960.

Liverani, Mario. "Memorandum on the Approach to Historiographic Texts." *Orientalia* 42 (1973):178-194.

Longman III, Tremper. "Israelite Genres in their Ancient Near Eastern Context." Pages 177-195 in *The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty-First Century*. Edited by Marvin A. Sweeney and Ehud Ben Zvi. Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 2003.

———. "Literary Approaches and Interpretation." in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*. Edited by Willem VanGemeren. Vol. 1 of 5. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.

Lowery, R. H. *The Reforming Kings: Cult and Society in First Temple Judah*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 120. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991.

Lundbom, Jack R. *Jeremiah: A Study in Ancient Hebrew Rhetoric*. Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series 18. Missoula: Scholars Press, 1975.

Mailloux, Steven. "Interpretation and Rhetorical Hermeneutics." Pages 39-60 in *Reception Study: From Literary Theory to Cultural Studies*. Edited by James L. Machor and Philip Goldstein. New York: Routledge, 2001.

Mandelbaum, Maurice. "The Presuppositions of Metahistory." *History & Theory* 19 (1980):39-54.

McNutt, Paula M. *Reconstructing the Society of Ancient Israel*. Edited by Douglas A. Knight. Library of Ancient Israel. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999.

Meyers, Carol L. "Jachin and Boaz in Religious and Political Perspective." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 45 (1983):167-178.

Meyers, Eric M. "Second Temple Studies in the Light of Recent Archaeology: Part I: The Persian and Hellenistic Periods." *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies* 2 (1994):25-42.

Meynet, Roland. *Rhetorical Analysis: An Introduction to Biblical Rhetoric*. New, revised English ed. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament. Supplement Series 256. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998.

Muilenburg, James. "Form Criticism and Beyond." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 88 (1969):1-18.

———. "The Linguistic and Rhetorical Usages of the Particle ky in the Old Testament." *Hebrew Union College Annual* 32 (1961):135-160.

———. "The Literary Character of Isaiah 34." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 59 (1940):339-365.

Myers, Jacob M. *II Chronicles: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*. The Anchor Bible 13. Garden City: Doubleday, 1965.

Nemet-Nejat, Karen Rhea. *Daily Life in Ancient Mesopotamia*. The Greenwood Press "Daily Life Through History" Series. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998.

Nylander, Carl. "Achaemenid Imperial Art." Pages 345-360 in *Power and Propaganda: A Symposium on Ancient Empires*. Edited by Mogens Trolle Larsen. *Mesopotamia:*

Copenhagen Studies in Assyriology 7: Power and Propaganda: A Symposium on Ancient Empires. Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1979.

Patrick, Dale, and Allen Michael Scult. *Rhetoric and Biblical Interpretation*. Edited by J. A. David Clines and P. R. Davies. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 82. Sheffield: The Almond Press, 1990.

Patton, John H. "Causation and Creativity in Rhetorical Situations: Distinctions and Implications." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 65 (1979):36-55.

Provan, Iain W. "Ideologies, Literary and Critical: Reflections on Recent Writing on the History of Israel." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 114 (1995):585-606.

Rahmani, L Y. "Ancient Jerusalem's Funerary Customs and Tombs: Part 1." *Biblical Archaeologist* 44 (1981):171-177.

———. "Ancient Jerusalem's Funerary Customs and Tombs: Part 2." *Biblical Archaeologist* 44 (1981):229-235.

———. "Ancient Jerusalem's Funerary Customs and Tombs: Part 3." *Biblical Archaeologist* 45 (1982):109-119.

———. "Ancient Jerusalem's Funerary Customs and Tombs: Part 4." *Biblical Archaeologist* 45 (1982):43-53.

Raphael, Rebecca. "That's No Literature, That's my Bible: On James Kugel's Objections to the Idea of Biblical Poetry." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 27 (2002):37-45.

Redford, Donald B. "The Literary Motif of the Exposed Child." *Numen* 14 (1967):209-228.

Ridout, George. "The Rape of Tamar: A Rhetorical Analysis of 2 Sam 13:1-22." Pages 75-84 in *Rhetorical Criticism: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg*. Edited by Jared Judd Jackson and Martin Kessler. *Pittsburgh Theological Monograph Series 1*. Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1974.

Ryan, Eugene E. *Aristotle's Theory of Rhetorical Argumentation*. Collection Noesis. Montreal: Bellarmin, 1984.

Sacon, Kiyoshi K. "Isaiah 40:1-11: A Rhetorical-Critical Study." Pages 99-116 in *Rhetorical Criticism: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg. Pittsburgh Theological Monograph Series 1*. Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1974.

Sasson, Jack M., ed. *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. 4 vols. New York: Scribner, 1995.

Schaefer, G. E. "The Significance of Seeking God in the Purpose of the Chronicler." Th.D. diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1972.

Schams, Christine. *Jewish Scribes in the Second-Temple Period*. Sheffield, Eng.: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998.

Schaper, Joachim. "The Jerusalem Temple as an Instrument of the Achaemenid Fiscal Administration." *Vetus Testamentum* 45 (1995):528-539.

Schniedewind, William M. "Prophets and Prophecy in the Books of Chronicles." Pages 204-224 in *The Chronicler as Historian*. Edited by Matt Patrick Graham, Kenneth G. Hoglund and Steven L. McKenzie. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 238*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.

Schulte, Hannelis. "The End of the Omride Dynasty: Social-Ethical Observations on the Subject of Power and Violence." *Semeia* 66 (1994):133-148.

Selman, Martin J. *2 Chronicles: A Commentary*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries 10b. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1994.

Serandour, Arnaud. "King, Priest and Temple." *Near Eastern Archaeology* 61 (1998):6.

Shiloh, Yigal. "The City of David Archaeological Project: The Third Season-1980." *Biblical Archaeologist* 44 (1981):161-170.

Snyman, Gerrie. ""Tis a Vice To Know Him": Readers' Response-Ability and Responsibility in 2 Chronicles 14-16." *Semeia* 77 (1997):91-113.

Solvang, Elna K. *A Woman's Place is in the House: Royal Women of Judah and their Involvement in the House of David.* Edited by David Clines and P. R. Davies. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 349. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003.

Spanier, Ktziah. "The Northern Israelite Queen Mother in the Judaean Court: Athalia and Abi." Pages 136-149 in *Boundaries of the Ancient Near Eastern World: a Tribute to Cyrus H. Gordon. Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 113 no.* 2. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998.

Speiser, E. A. "Census and Ritual Expiation in Mari and Israel." *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 149 (1958):17-25.

Stern, Ephraim. *Material Culture of the Land of the Bible in the Persian Period: 538-332 B.C.* Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1982.

Sternberg, Meir. *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading.* Edited by Robert M. Polzin. Indiana Literary Biblical Series. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985.

Sweeney, Marvin A., and Ehud Ben Zvi. "Introduction." Pages 1-11 in *The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty-First Century.* Edited by Marvin A. Sweeney and Ehud Ben Zvi. Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 2003.

———, eds. *The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty-First Century.* Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 2003.

Thompson, J. A. *1, 2 Chronicles.* The New American Commentary 9. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994.

Trible, Phyllis. *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality.* Overtures to Biblical Theology 2. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978.

———. *Rhetorical Criticism: Context, Method, and the Book of Jonah.* Edited by Gene M. Tucker. Guides to Biblical Scholarship. Old Testament Series. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994.

Trotter, James M. "Was the Second Jerusalem Temple a Primarily Persian Project?" *Scandanavial Journal of the Old Testament* 15 (2001):276-294.

Van Rooy, Harry V. "Prophet and Society in the Persian Period According to Chronicles." Pages 163-179 in *Second Temple Studies 2: Temple and Community in the Persian Period.* Edited by Tamara Cohn Eskenazi and Kent Harold Richards. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 175.* Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994.

VanGemeren, Willem, ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis.* electronic ed. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.

Waltke, Bruce K., and Michael Patrick O'Connor. *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax.* Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990.

Watts, James W., ed. *Persia and Torah: The Theory of Imperial Authorization of the Pentateuch.* SBL Symposium Series 17. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001.

Weinberg, Joel. *The Citizen-Temple Community.* Translated by Daniel L. Smith-Christopher. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 151. Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1992.

White, Hayden V. "Rhetoric and History." Pages 3-25 in *Theories of History: Papers Read at a Clark Library Seminar, March 6, 1976.* Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, 1978.

Whitelam, Keith W. "The Symbols of Power: Aspects of Royal Propaganda in the United Monarchy." *Biblical Archaeologist* 49, no. 3 (1986):166-173.

Wilhoit, Jim, Colin Duriez, Leland Ryken, Daniel G. Reid, Tremper Longman, and Douglas Penney, eds. *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1998.

Williamson, H G M. "Sources and Redaction in the Chronicler's Genealogy of Judah." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 98 (1979):351-359.

Williamson, H. G. M. *1 and 2 Chronicles*. Edited by R. E. Clements. New Century Bible. Grand Rapids and London: Eerdmans and Marshall Morgan & Scott Publishing, 1982.

———. *Ezra, Nehemiah*. Word Biblical Commentary 16. Waco: Word Books, 1985.

Wilson, Robert R. "Old Testament Genealogies in Recent Research." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 94 (1975):169-189.

Wright, John Wesley. "Guarding the Gates: 1 Chronicles 26:1-19 and the Roles of Gatekeepers in Chronicles." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 48 (1990):69-81.